ONE HUNDRED GREATEST

PRESTON NORTH END FC

POSTWAR PLAYERS

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WRITTEN BY EDDIE COTTON

EDITED BY JOHN BOOTH

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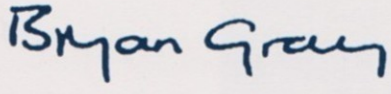
Foreword

by Bryan M Gray

How do you choose the 100 Greatest PNE Players since the war? Answer: with trepidation and in the certain knowledge that there will be many arguments about who is in the team and who is on the bench. I am sure this book will stimulate debate and argument which, I think, is a good thing. Preston is a football town and many people have said to me that Preston North End supporters know their football. One of football's attractions is the opportunity to exchange opinions on which was the best game, who was the best goalkeeper and countless other debating points. We are all entitled to our own opinions and there is no right or wrong answer to these questions.

Any compilation of PNE's Greatest post war players will be subjective. I have been a supporter for only six years, some of you have been supporters for fifty years or more. How do you compare a player from the great teams of the 1940's and 1950's with a player of today? How do you compare the standards in Division One after the war with standards in the top flight today? At the time of writing we are in Division Two of the Football League. Some people like to remind us that this is really 'the old 3rd Division'. This is not true. Football has changed dramatically, particularly with the influx of overseas players and the growth of the professional game. Standards today are higher than they were when I was a boy standing on the terraces watching Barnsley and Rotherham.

The compilers of this book have included players from the 1940's and 1950's through to the current squad. It is a fascinating insight into the range of footballers who have played at Deepdale since the war. I hope you enjoy this book and enjoy equally arguing and disagreeing with the selections made.



Bryan M Gray, Patron PNE Former Players Association

Introduction

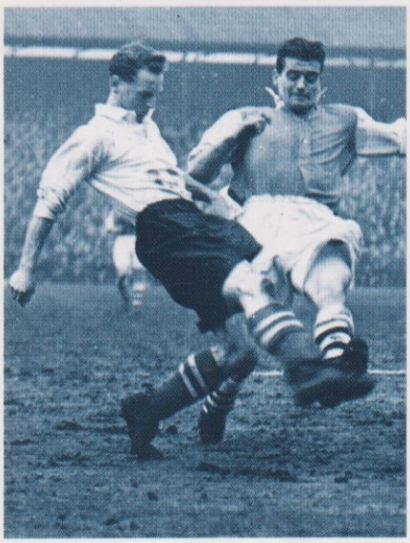
Earlier this year in anticipation of this book, the Lancashire Evening Post ran a poll to find the 'best ever' post war North End side. Fans were asked to mix players from different eras to come up with the all time best side. The response was fantastic, with hundred and hundreds of readers taking part. The fact that there was such a huge response also means that we can be fairly happy, that the team finally chosen, is one that will meet with the approval of most North End fans.

Not surprisingly, given North End' proud tradition and the exploits of the great teams of the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's few modern day players have made the starting eleven or even the bench.

Virtually every fan chose the legendary Sir Tom Finney as a member of their fantasy 'best ever' North End team.

Best Ever Team?

in order of most votes



1. Sir Tom Finney.

2. Willie Cunningham.

3. Alan Kelly Snr.

The eleven most popular players chosen by the fans are pictured here.

Readers were not given any restrictions, and despite only playing a handful of games here at Deepdale, David Beckham was a very popular selection, because events since suggest that he is the best player to pull on a white shirt in the last twenty years, if not the last thirty.

Soccer pundit Mark Lawrenson, who went on to great things with Brighton and then Liverpool after leaving his hometown club, was a popular choice as centre-half. Sir Bobby Charlton, who came out of retirement and played 38 games for North End whilst manager made the team in a midfield role.

Alan Kelly snr was the most popular choice as 'keeper with Fred Else a close second. The remainder of the back line was made up of Willie Cunningham, Tommy Docherty and Joe Marston who played together throughout the 1950's, including the FA Cup final defeat against WBA in 1954,

In midfield, alongside Beckham and Charlton the fan's favourite choice was Finney and Peter Thompson out wide (the later was only just ahead of his namesake, Tommy Thompson, for a place in the side). Howard Kendall and Alex Dawson made up the side.

It is staggering to even imagine what this side would cost to put together. If Alan Shearer is worth £15 million, what price Sir Tom Finney? At a conservative estimate this side would probably cost at least £50 million to assemble at today's prices, probably a lot more!

In addition to these eleven players Charlie Wayman, Tommy Thompson and Alex Bruce were very close to being selected by the fans for inclusion in the 'best ever' team.

The 100 players in this book are a true representation of the best players throughout five decades. We hope that it will bring back great memories for young and old fans alike.

4. Joe Marston.

5. Tommy Docherty.

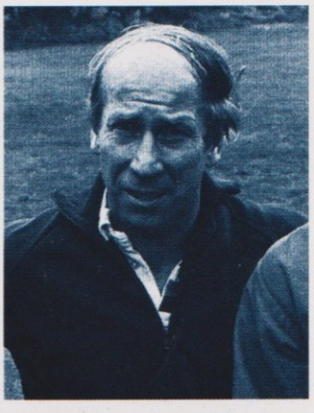
6. Mark Lawrenson.

7. Alex Dawson.

8. Howard Kendall.

9. David Beckham.

10. Peter Thompson.



11. Sir Bobby Charlton.

Gareth Ainsworth

right wing

A fast and skillful right winger who endeared himself to the North End faithful during two spells at Deepdale, before going on to greater things with Port Vale and Wimbledon.

Ainsworth joined North End in January 1992, from Northwich Victoria, after completing a YTS contract with his hometown club, Blackburn Rovers. He made his debut in a 2-0 defeat away at Shrewsbury and went on to make just 6 League and Cup appearances, scoring one goal, before being allowed to join Cambridge United during the 1991/92 Season.

Many fans still remember the way he broke down sobbing after relegation was confirmed, with defeat at Bolton, on the final day of the season. This one instance illustrated what North End meant to Gareth Ainsworth.

After a brief spell with the U's, however, he returned to Deepdale on another free transfer in December 1992. He made his return in a 2-2 draw with Exeter at Deepdale during the 1992/93 season. He went on to make 26 appearances in what proved to be a relegation year for Preston. Many fans still remember the way he broke down sobbing after relegation was confirmed, with defeat at Bolton, on the final day of the season. This one instance illustrated what North End meant to Gareth Ainsworth.

The following season Ainsworth played his best football in a White shirt, knocking in 11 League goals, as North End got to the Play-Off final at Wembley. In early season he showed his eye for goal, scoring four goals in the first three games. Once again, however, after the play-off defeat, Gareth was allowed to leave Deepdale and in October 1995 he joined Lincoln City for £25,000, which like many other transfers at the time, had a sell-on clause. Ainsworth excelled at Lincoln in a striking position, knocking in a goal almost every two games for the Imps and it was no surprise when a club from a higher division snapped him up.

This club proved to be Port Vale. They payed a club record £500,000 for his services and he was the only ever-present for the Vale side during the 1996/97 season scoring 11 goals, winning the Supporters Player of the Year Award, and once again he attracted interest from clubs in a higher division and Premiership club, Wimbledon netted him for a cool £2 million. Since this move to the Dons, he has been somewhat plagued by injury, but he has managed to endear himself to the Wimbledon fans, as he did at North End, with two goals against Newcastle at the beginning of the 1999/2000 campaign.

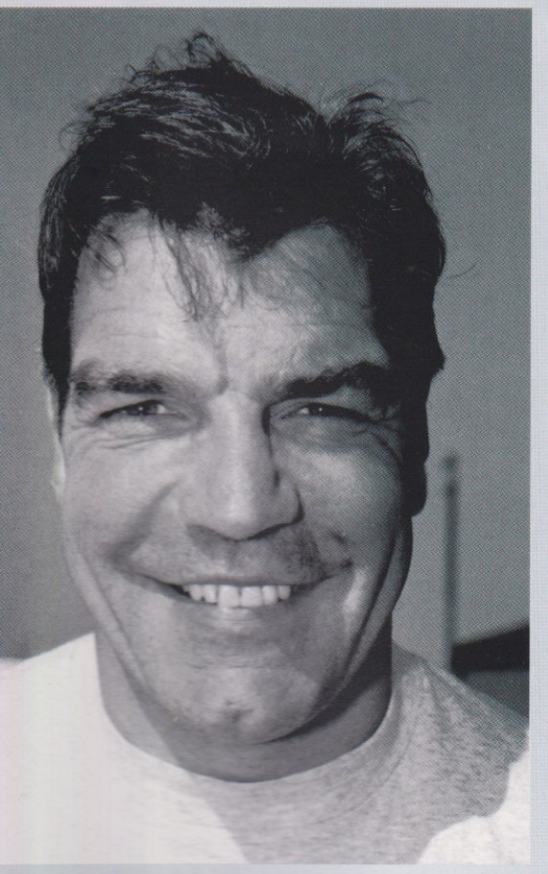
5

Sam Allardyce

centre half

Dudley born, Sam Allardyce initially began his playing career at Burnden Park, and made his first team debut for Bolton Wanderers against Notts County in 1973. He was later a member of the Bolton side which gained promotion to the First Division in 1978.

Two years later, the vagaries of football's fortunes meant that Big Sam, as he was affectionately known throughout the football world, was considered surplus to requirements, and left to join Sunderland for a fee of £150,000. But, after just one season at Roker Park, he was transferred to Millwall, who were languishing in the Third Division, for a £150,000 fee.



After a short spell at The Den, he upped sticks completely and moved across the Atlantic to America, where he played in the NASL League for a short time. Sam then decided to try his luck once again in England, enjoying brief stints at Coventry and Huddersfield, before rejoining Bolton Wanderers. At the beginning of the 1986/87 season, he joined Preston North End on a free transfer, and quickly settled into what turned into a highly successful campaign. Promotion to the Third Division was gained at the end of that season, with Sam playing a crucial role in defence. He eventually made ninety appearances for Preston North End, before leaving to join West Bromwich Albion where curiously, he made just one first team appearance, as substitute.

Big Sam eventually returned to Deepdale as Youth team coach, and took over first team affairs after the departure from the club of manager, Les Chapman. He later managed arch-rivals, Blackpool, and took the Seasiders to that season's play-off semi-finals, before being dismissed when his side failed to clear that final hurdle.

He returned to Bolton Wanderers in October 1999 as manager, after nearly three years as manager of Notts County, where he had won promotion to Division Two.

Big Sam eventually returned to Deepdale as Youth team coach, and took over first team affairs after the departure from the club of manager, Les Chapman.

Michael Appleton

right midfield

The inclusion of the former Manchester United reserve team player in this list of 100 greatest Post-War Preston North End players, is a purposeful exercise, as it highlights the current and potential future standing of one of the Nationwide League's most talented individuals.

Appleton arrived at Deepdale in August 1997, for a club record fee of £500,000. There were a host of other clubs interested in signing Appleton, but in the end, the persuasive techniques of former manager, Gary Peters held sway.

The youngster had already gained experience of winning trophies, when a member of Manchester United's triumphant reserve side the previous season, though full Premiership experience eluded him. A boyhood United fan, Michael's proudest moment arrived when he came on as a substitute for his idols during a League Cup tie against Swindon Town at Old Trafford a few seasons ago. He later gained league experience when on loan with Grimsby Town, managing to score three goals in ten outings for the Mariners, including a memorable goal against personal arch-enemies, Manchester City.

His Deepdale career so far hasn't been without its ups and downs, though it started brightly enough, with a couple of goals during his first few outings for his new club. A purposeful and highly skilled playmaker in the middle of the pitch, Appleton is currently helping Preston North End to achieve their long held ambition of making it into the First Division, and ultimately, the Premiership.

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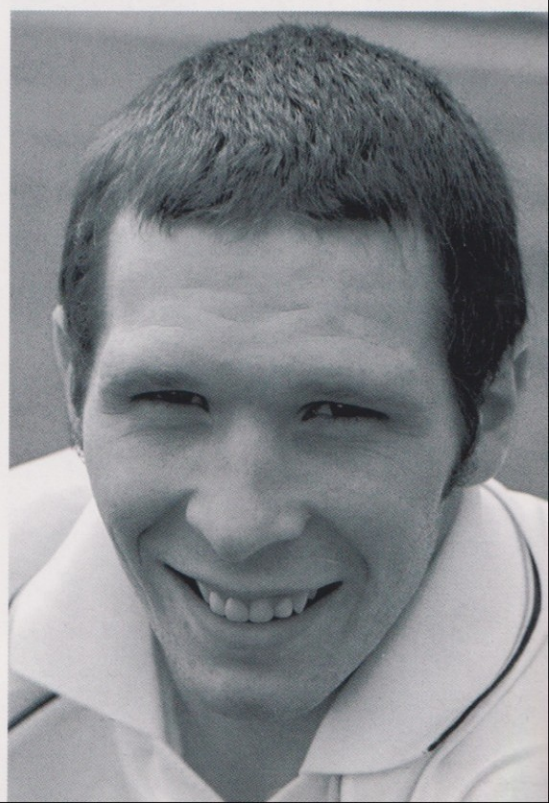


Lee Ashcroft

outside right

The former Preston North End forward began his Deepdale career in the usual manner for a local lad, via the club's youth training scheme. His initial first team appearance came as a substitute in a 2-1 defeat to Wigan Athletic in November 1990, at the tender age of eighteen.

He ended up leading goalscorer as Preston North End consolidated their new found fame in Division Two, having been promoted as Champions a couple of seasons earlier.

After the excitement of his inauguration into the senior scene, he had to wait a further three months to experience more of the same heady excitement, when playing in a Deepdale derby against Bolton Wanderers. Again though, Ashcroft's appearance in the Preston North End first team coincided with a 2-1 defeat. The final game of the season also saw Ashcroft record his first goal for the club, in yet another 2-1 defeat, this time against Tranmere Rovers at Prenton Park. In that first season, he played in fourteen games, eight of them as substitute. He eventually made ninety one first team appearances for Preston North End, before leaving to join West Bromwich Albion a couple of seasons later, for £250,000. By this stage, his prolific form had alerted the international selectors, who awarded him a single U21 international cap, though he never managed to secure a regular slot in the squad.

In September 1996, Ashcroft rejoined Preston North End for £150,000, and quickly resumed his forte for scoring goals. But, his first few weeks back at Deepdale were fraught with hamstring problems, which kept him out of contention for six weeks. But, as the season drew to a close, Ashcroft finally regained fitness and began to show the sort of form which had persuaded the club to bring him back to Deepdale from the Hawthorns. The next few seasons saw the locally born Ashcroft steal the show in a goalscoring sense on many occasions for Preston North End. He ended up leading goalscorer as Preston North End consolidated their new found fame in Division Two, having been promoted as Champions a couple of seasons earlier. His form alerted other clubs during the 1997/98 season, to the point where Preston North End were offered £500,000 for his services by newly promoted Grimsby Town. The East coast club were keen to secure the services of Ashcroft to help in their quest for success in their First Division campaign. Subsequently he failed to make an immediate impact because of injury.

Alec Ashworth

inside right

He formed a good partnership with Alex Dawson that season, both players sharing forty four league goals as Preston North End missed promotion to the First Division by a whisker as well as reaching the cup final.

Alec began his league career at Everton, making his league debut against Sheffield Wednesday in the rarefied atmosphere of Goodison Park.

He spent three successful seasons at the club, before moving to Luton Town in a player exchange deal, which took future Everton and Northern Ireland manager, Billy Bingham to Merseyside. Ashworth later signed for Northampton Town and soon got his name into the goalscoring charts, netting twenty five goals in just thirty league outings for the Cobblers, which helped steer the club to the Third Division Championship.

In June 1963, he signed for Preston North End, making his debut on the opening day of the 1963/64 season against Leyton Orient at Brisbane Road. He formed a good partnership with Alex Dawson that season, both players sharing forty four league goals as Preston North End missed promotion to the First Division by a whisker as well as reaching the cup final. He finished that season having scored fourteen goals in thirty one appearances, a tremendous strike rate.

Unfortunately, injury problems began to mount up for Alec, to the point where he only managed to play in twelve games during the next two seasons. Knee ligament damage was the main cause of his woes, and after playing against Derby County at the Baseball Ground in April 1966, he was finally forced to retire from the game.

Jimmy Baxter

inside left

The year was 1952, and Preston North End were pondering the problem of just how they were to replace club stalwart, Bobbie Beattie, who was on the verge of retiring from the game. It wasn't an easy adjustment to make, because Beattie had enjoyed a fine Deepdale career and would be hard to replace in the Preston North End forward line.

As the club pondered on how to replace such an experienced player, their eyes suddenly alighted on Jimmy Baxter, who was playing for Barnsley at the time. Having watched the player for a number of games, the club made their move to sign him. Shortly afterwards, Baxter joined up with his new team-mates at Deepdale, and the rest, as they say, is history.

At that time, Preston North End were known throughout football as a cultured, passing side, with the resources to unlock any defence with rapier-like attacking play. Baxter's style of football suited his new club's philosophy to a tee. He quickly forged a tremendous attacking partnership with Tom Finney and Charlie Wayman in the team's forward line. His ability to ride tackles and create goalscoring opportunities for both of those players quickly marked him down as a major asset to the club. Though only comparatively small in stature, Baxter certainly knew how to take advantage of any defensive weaknesses. He took many a knock from opponents who were content to keep him out of the game as much as possible. He wasn't a man to complain about any rough treatment he received, though, and continued in fine form for Preston North End for a number of seasons.

Seven years after joining Preston North End, Jimmy Baxter was allowed to rejoin his former club, arriving at Oakwell in July 1959. During his time at Deepdale, he amassed 245 league appearances, scoring sixty five goals in the process. He also played in twenty two FA Cup ties during his time at the club, scoring six goals in that most famous of competitions, including an appearance in the 1954 Wembley final against West Bromwich Albion.

He quickly forged a tremendous attacking partnership with Tom Finney and Charlie Wayman in the team's forward line.

Mick Baxter

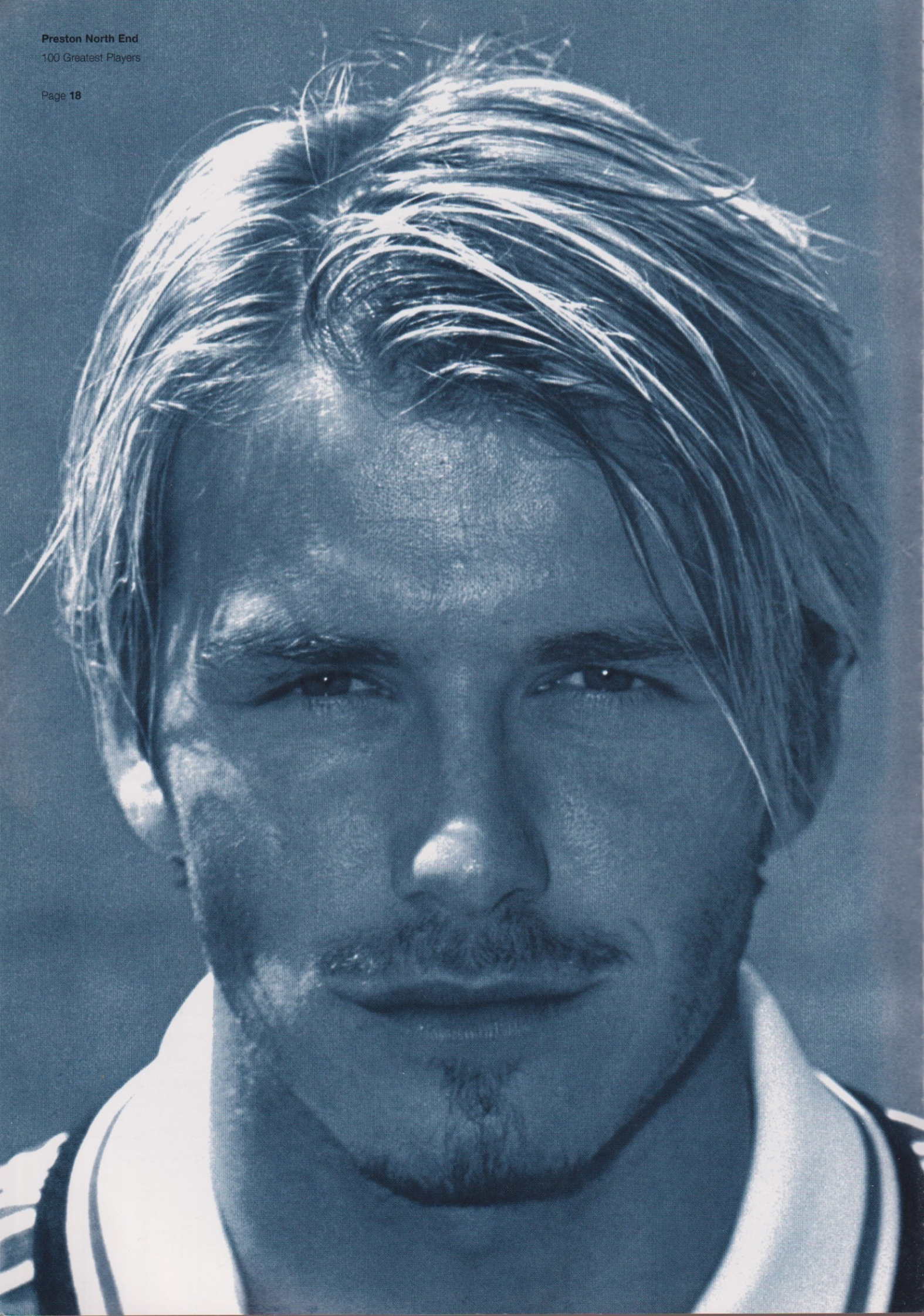
centre half

Mick Baxter signed professional forms for Preston North End on his 18th birthday, joining his brother, Stuart, who had already signed for the club a few weeks earlier. Both youngsters specialised in the centre half role, with Stuart establishing himself in the first team a few months before his younger brother.

Mick got his chance of senior action against Grimsby Town in April 1975, and such was his progress that he eventually replaced his brother as the club's regular centre half during the following season.

Apart from his defensive responsibilities, Mick was also prone to joining Preston North End's attack as much as possible in search of goals. He scored the first of his seventeen league goals for the club during his inaugural season at Deepdale, in a 4-3 defeat against Hereford United in 1975/76. Baxter eventually made 210 first team appearances for Preston North End, before leaving to join Middlesbrough at the start of the 1981/82 season for £350,000. He made 122 league appearances for the Ayresome Park outfit, before being transferred to Portsmouth. Unfortunately, Mick never managed to pull on the blue shirt of Pompey even once, as illness prevented him forging a career on the South coast. As a result, he was forced to retire prematurely from the game. He eventually returned to Deepdale, where he began a new career as the club's Community Development Officer. Sadly, Mick Baxter died in 1989, at the tragically young age of thirty three.

Baxter eventually made 210 first team appearances for Preston North End, before leaving to join Middlesbrough at the start of the 1981/82 season for £350,000.



7

David Beckham

midfield

Though only on loan at Deepdale for a few short weeks during the mid-1990s, David Beckham, by definition, just has to be included in any list of greatest players ever to don a Preston North End shirt. He made just five appearances in the Deepdale first team, scoring two goals in the process, but Manchester United manager, Sir Alex Ferguson, at the time, realised that his young prodigy's footballing education would be enhanced to a large degree at Preston North End.

Beckham approached his short lived role at Preston North End with great enthusiasm, and not a little skill.

Ferguson's wise philosophy certainly paid dividends, as the youngster picked up invaluable league experience at a time in his burgeoning career when he might have been expected to appear in youth and reserve team games only. Beckham approached his short lived role at Preston North End with great enthusiasm, and not a little skill. Those trademark crosses and free kicks were, even then, becoming evident in his play. His diligence to duty whilst at Preston North End certainly endeared him to the Deepdale faithful, even though they realised his stay was to be short-lived.

Since then, of course, the name of David Beckham has become known throughout the world of football. He has appeared in countless England internationals, and played a prominent part as the home country competed in the 1998 World Cup finals in France. The only black-spot for the midfielder was his sending off against Argentina, after he had appeared to flick out at Argentina's, Diego Simone, during that historic clash which England eventually lost on penalties. But, any malice felt towards Beckham for that incident by fans of other clubs, was soon disregarded, with the player displaying hitherto, unknown battling qualities, which carried him through those dark days in the season following the World Cup.

As for his Manchester United career, David Beckham has already won League Championship, FA Cup and European Cup winning medals. The highlight for him, as for everybody connected with Manchester United, was winning the treble of League, FA Cup and European Cup in the 1998/99 season. He will be hoping to add to that incredible tally of medals both for club and country during the next few seasons.

Graham Bell

right wing

Middleton born, Graham Bell began his league career at Oldham Athletic, having been spotted playing for local side, Chadderton as a youngster. Such was his talent in the middle of the pitch, that within a couple of years of being plucked from the relative obscurity of local amateur football, he had won England international youth honours - due recognition for his prodigious talent.

7

The then England boss, Don Revie was so impressed with his form for both club and country, that he put Bell on stand-by for the full England squad, though the midfielder didn't manage to make the breakthrough into the England senior side during his career.

In terms of domestic football, Bell played in 170 league games for Oldham Athletic, before being put on the transfer list, having become unsettled with life at Boundary Park. He was transferred to Preston North End for a bargain fee of £80,000 in March 1979. He quickly settled into his new environment at Deepdale, and contributed a great deal to the Preston North End cause. He eventually made 143 league appearances for the Lilywhites, before signing for a short loan spell at Huddersfield Town. He later signed for Carlisle United on a free transfer, though failed to settle in that part of the country. He then joined Bolton Wanderers, before concluding his playing career with Tranmere Rovers.

He quickly settled into his new environment at Deepdale, and contributed a great deal to the Preston North End cause.

5

Tommy Booth

centre half

Before joining Preston North End, Tommy Booth had experienced most of football's good times. Having scored the winning goal in an FA Cup semi-final against Everton in 1969, and playing in the final against Leicester City, a game which Manchester City edged by one goal to nil, the Langley born defender knew at first hand what success was all about.

And, in October 1981, he brought his considerable prowess to Deepdale, when Preston North End paid £30,000 for his services. He eventually made eighty four first team appearances for North End, before being appointed as manager in April 1985, after a short spell as coach.

Tommy Booth (left) with Brian Kidd at the Deepdale training ground.

But, if success as a player had come easily for Tommy, the reverse was sadly the case during his managerial career. He tried valiantly to stem the unfortunate tide of mediocrity which enveloped the team at that time, but with the club heading for relegation to the Fourth Division, not to mention an infamous home FA Cup defeat at the hands of non-league, Telford United, the parting of the ways was inevitable. He left just days after that resounding and disappointing 4-1 cup defeat in December 1985.

He eventually made eighty four first team appearances for North End, before being appointed as manager in April 1985, after a short spell as coach.

Gary Brazil

inside right

Gary Brazil joined Preston North End on loan in 1984 from Sheffield United, before the deal was made permanent a few months later. Gary was originally an apprentice with Crystal Palace, but the south London club felt he wasn't going to make the grade at Selhurst Park, and allowed him to join the Bramall Lane outfit.

He quickly found his form with the south Yorkshire club, albeit in the reserves, as he found his first team appearances severely limited at that time. This situation eventually led to the aforementioned loan deal involving North End.

After arriving at Deepdale, the Tunbridge Wells born forward quickly forged a prolific partnership with John Thomas upfront. His individual goalscoring record for the club was quite remarkable, as he found the net fifty six times in 166 league appearances, before his departure to Newcastle United in February 1989. Unfortunately, Gary found life a struggle at St James Park, appearing in only twenty three first team games, sixteen of them as substitute. In September 1990, he moved closer to his roots when he joined Fulham, and went on to figure in over 200 first team games for the Cottagers.

His individual goalscoring record for the club was quite remarkable, as he found the net fifty six times in 166 league appearances, before his departure to Newcastle United in February 1989.

Alex Bruce

forward

It was thanks to Jimmy Scott, one of Preston North End's scouts, that Alex Bruce decided to leave his Dundee home to travel to Preston and sign apprentice forms with the club.

Having starred in both school and town team during his formative years, Bruce was quickly sold on the idea of playing for Preston, after impressing greatly in trials at the club's training ground. He had always harboured dreams of making it as a professional footballer, and quickly realised that Preston North End offered him a rare opportunity of achieving that long held dream.

After signing, Bruce quickly graduated through the youth and reserve teams, and made his first team debut when he was just nineteen years of age, against Swindon Town at Deepdale in 1972. The game ended all-square at 2-2, but Alex had made a good enough impression to stay on the first team scene, albeit on the bench, during the next few games. It was a fixture against Orient in November of that same year, that he finally hit the big time, when scoring as a substitute in North End's 2-1 win over the London side at Brisbane Road.

The goals soon began to flow regularly, and this rich vein of goalscoring form soon had First Division clubs clamouring for his signature. Two years after initially joining Preston North End, he joined Newcastle United in a £120,000 deal, though thankfully for North End fans, he didn't appear to settle in the North East, which meant his departure from St James Park was always on the cards. When he did eventually decide to leave, his first port of call was Deepdale, where he renewed his association with the club in August 1975.

As you can imagine, the North End fans were delighted to have Bruce back, and especially so when he finished top scorer for the club with fifteen goals in thirty eight games during the 1975/76 season. His partnership with strike partner, Mike Elwiss became the scourge of opposition defences throughout the league, as both players forged an unbeatable partnership upfront. Alex Bruce eventually finished up as Preston North End's leading goalscorer in five out of the next six seasons. He finally ended his Deepdale career by moving to neighbours, Wigan Athletic, which is where he finished his playing days.

After signing, Bruce quickly graduated through the youth and reserve teams, and made his first team debut when he was just nineteen years of age, against Swindon Town at Deepdale in 1972.

Ian Bryson

left wing

Ian Bryson began his career with his hometown club, Kilmarnock, making 215 league appearances and scoring forty goals, before making the journey south to Sheffield United. He became a real crowd favourite at Bramall Lane, where his tenacity and powerful surges in support of attack helped the Blades become a real force to be reckoned with.

He made 155 league appearances for the club, and scored thirty six goals, before leaving to join Barnsley. His form continued to receive rave reviews in Yorkshire, but rather surprisingly, he was eventually allowed to leave to join Preston North End.

Soon afterwards, he was appointed team captain, a role which suited the combative Scottish born midfielder rather well. He wore his new cloak of responsibility with utmost devotion and pride, and went on to play a major part in Preston North End's Championship winning season in 1995/96.

He was allowed to leave North End on a free transfer at the end of the 1996/97 season, joining Rochdale. He is now playing for non-league Bamber Bridge after training with North End through the summer of 1999.

His form continued to receive rave reviews in Yorkshire, but rather surprisingly, he was eventually allowed to leave to join Preston North End.

Francis Burns

left back

Francis Burns first hit the headlines when Matt Busby, on the advice of his half brother, Jimmy Mathie, who was working at the time as Manchester United's chief coach, signed the player from a junior team in Lanarkshire.

At Deepdale, he teamed up with his old Manchester United colleague, Bobby Charlton, who was manager at the time.

Burns soon settled into life at Old Trafford, quietly but efficiently making his way through the club's youth and reserve ranks, before making his first team debut at the age of eighteen, against West Ham United. That first game was the making of him, and it's true to say, he never looked back, figuring in most of United's remaining games that season. The only disappointment was that he missed that season's most important game - the European Cup final - against the mighty Benfica at Wembley, having been thought of as too inexperienced for such a top level game by Matt Busby.

He eventually made 155 league and cup appearances for United, before leaving to join Southampton in 1972 for £50,000. The defender never really settled on the south coast, and elected to take up Preston North End's offer to join them just twelve months later, for a £30,000 fee. At Deepdale, he teamed up with his old Manchester United colleague, Bobby Charlton, who was manager at the time. Persistent injury problems prevented Francis from regularly displaying his enormous talent at the club, but nevertheless, he still managed to clock up 273 league games for North End, before joining Shamrock Rovers during the twilight of his career.

7

Lee Cartwright

right wing

Lee Cartwright joined North End as a raw but very promising youngster in February 1992, having been spotted by the club's scouts playing local junior football. He quickly forged a reputation as a very fast winger, with the ability to both create and score goals.

He is also equally adept in midfield, or as a make-shift defender, with his tremendous turn of foot giving Preston North End further covering options when needed. Cartwright has been one of the first names on the team sheet since he first broke through to the senior ranks in the mid-1990s, and has the honour of being the longest serving player on the books in 1999.

He has however, also been dogged by various injuries, the worst of which occurred during Preston North End's run to the Third Division Championship in 1995/96. The leg injury he incurred during the run-in to that successful campaign curtailed his Deepdale career for almost a year. But, the winger has since managed to fight his way back into contention with a number of skilled and courageous displays for the Lilywhites, despite receiving further injuries since.

The Rossendale born winger is renowned for being one of the fastest, if not the fittest player at the club, and this is certainly borne out whenever you see him chasing half the length of the pitch to either set up attacks or helping to dispossess an opposition forward's charging run. With time on his side, Cartwright will be hoping to achieve the game's highest honours with North End in the future.

The Rossendale born winger is renowned for being one of the fastest, if not the fittest player at the club

Les Chapman

midfield

Football folk speak in awed tones about the playing record of Southampton's Terry Payne, a player who amassed almost one thousand appearances for the south coast club. Former Preston North End player, Les Chapman nearly equalled this prodigious feat, making over 700 first team appearances for various clubs, over a twenty two year period.

He began his long and distinguished career at Oldham Athletic, before moving to Yorkshire to play for Huddersfield Town. He then re-signed for Oldham Athletic, before spells with Stockport County, Bradford City, Rochdale and Stockport County again, before finally making his move to Deepdale.

A fine midfield player, Chapman made fifty three first team appearances for Preston North End, before finally retiring to take up the role of coach with the club. In February 1990, he was appointed team manager, after the departure of John McGrath. His new job coincided with a decent run of form from Preston North End, a period of on-the-pitch success which was timely, especially after the team had flirted with relegation for much of the season. But, as the team's form began to falter once more, the decision was taken by the club's board to relieve Les Chapman of the manager's job in September 1992.

A fine midfield player, Chapman made fifty three first team appearances for Preston North End, before finally retiring to take up the role of coach with the club.

Sir Bobby Charlton

inside right

Many people believe Sir Bobby Charlton to have been a one-club-player, making his final appearance for Manchester United at Chelsea after legendary exploits with the Reds, but North End fans fondly remember Sir Bobby turning out in a White shirt. A survivor of the Munich air disaster of 1958, Sir Bobby, as he was to become, was a respected player around the world for Manchester United and England.

He still holds the England goal scoring record, having hit the back of the net 49 times for his country. He was a model professional, known for his integrity, and was given many accolades during his playing career, including Footballer of the Year in 1966 and European Footballer of the Year in 1968.

He became Manager of Preston North End in 1973, but after relegation, in his first season, he decided it was necessary to pull on his boots again and registered as a player. During the 1974/75 season, he played 38 times in a White shirt, scoring eight goals. The following season however, he resigned after the board went behind his back to sell John Bird to Newcastle United. His integrity and respect were compromised and he decided to call it a day. This incident seemed to have disillusioned Sir Bobby as he never went back into management. He is currently a Director at Manchester United.

During the 1974/75 season, he played 38 times in a White shirt, scoring eight goals.

From left to right: Tony Morley, Alan Lamb, Bobby Charlton, Mike Elwiss and Mel Holden.

PNE line up 1974/75: Back row: Gary Williams, Nobby Stiles, John Brown, Ray Treacy and Stuart Baxter.
Middle row: Mel Holden, Alex Spark, John McMahon, David Sadler and Mike Elwiss.
Front row: Alan Lamb, Gordon Coleman, John Bird, Bobby Charlton, Francis Burns and Tony Morley.

Gordon Coleman

right wing

Gordon Coleman arrived at Deepdale, having been plucked from Nottinghamshire amateur football. It was a surprise that the two Nottingham clubs, Forest and County, hadn't made a serious move for the prolific young striker, because he had been earning rave reviews in that part of the country for the previous couple of years, as he banged in the goals on a regular basis for his local side.

7

Maybe they had been put off by the fact that Coleman had been deliberating on whether to become a professional footballer at all, having concentrated much of his spare time to studying at Nottingham College of Further Education. But, the lure of professional soccer eventually became too much for the youngster, and he set his sights on making a success of his football career with Preston North End.

His presence acted as a talisman, as Preston North End recorded a fine 3-1 victory over their Midlands opponents that day.

He made his league debut for the club at the tender age of seventeen, against West Bromwich Albion, in October 1973. His presence acted as a talisman, as Preston North End recorded a fine 3-1 victory over their Midlands opponents that day. He went on to play in a further seven first team games that season, but didn't manage to get his name on the scoresheet during that initial first team foray. His inaugural goal for Preston North End arrived the following season, against Crystal Palace at Deepdale. A quality striker with a distinctive eye for goal, Coleman played in 269 league games for the club over the next ten seasons, before joining Bury in August 1983.

2 Willie Cunningham

right back

One of Preston North End's most famous sons. Willie Cunningham arrived at Deepdale in July 1949 from Dunfermline Athletic, where he had already made quite a name for himself as a resourceful and skillful defender, having earlier joined them from junior soccer in Cowdenbeath.

The £5,000 fee which Preston North End paid for Cunningham was chicken feed, especially when you consider the depth of quality and consistency he brought to the team. He played in the 1954 FA Cup final against West Bromwich Albion, and managed to gain eight caps for Scotland during an illustrious playing career.

Between the years 1949 - 1963, he played in over 440 league and cup games for North End, before leaving to take over the player/manager's job at Southport. He acquitted himself well at Haig Avenue, but the lure of Deepdale was too strong, especially when he was asked to take the job of reserve team trainer soon afterwards.

He played in the 1954 FA Cup final against West Bromwich Albion, and managed to gain eight caps for Scotland during an illustrious playing career.

Willie Cunningham (left) with team mate Tony Singleton in the North End dressing room.

Then: with Sir Tom Finney.

Now: with Ian Rigby, Secretary of The Former Players Association.

Then: in his playing days.

Alex Dawson

centre forward

A recruit from Manchester United, the Black Prince joined Preston North End in October 1961, for a fee of £18,000. Born in Aberdeen, Alex Dawson headed south to Old Trafford as a youngster, and quickly established himself in the club's junior sides.

He signed professional forms shortly after his 17th birthday, in May 1957, having scored on his league debut against Burnley four weeks earlier.

After the terrible disaster which befell the Manchester club at Munich in February 1958, Alex found himself in the proverbial front line, as he led United's reassembled team to a cup final appearance against Aston Villa. He managed to score five goals in six matches during that emotional period for the club, including a hat-trick in the semi-final victory over Fulham.

After leaving Old Trafford, Alex quickly found his goalscoring touch at Deepdale, scoring on his debut against Rotherham at Millmoor. The goals continued to flow, with 114 goals in 197 games being his final total for Preston North End during a long and distinguished stay at the club. He also scored in Preston North End's 3-2 Cup Final defeat to West Ham United in 1964. Three years later, he joined Bury, before later moving to Brighton & Hove Albion and Brentford on loan, before finally hanging up his boots. During his playing career, Dawson played in almost 400 league games, scoring over 200 goals in the process.

Pictured left to right: Nat Buck (PNE Chairman), Alex Dawson and Willie Cunningham.

The goals continued to flow, with 114 goals in 197 games being his final total for Preston North End during a long and distinguished stay at the club.

Tommy Docherty

right half

The capture of Tommy Docherty from Glasgow Celtic for £4,000 on Guy Fawkes night in 1949, qualifies as one of Preston North End's shrewdest ever buys. The Doc, as he became known throughout a long and distinguished playing and managerial career, arrived at Deepdale just a matter of weeks before his half back compatriot, Willie Forbes, and twelve months before Australian born stopper, Joe Marston. This trio of tough tacklers were destined to form Preston North End's famous half back line of the early 1950's.

Docherty had arrived at Deepdale through a circuitous route, having worked his way up through Celtic's junior sides, before swapping Glasgow's mean streets for the faraway delights of Palestine, as a member of the Highland Light Infantry. Without mishap or accident, Tommy's two year service in Her Majesty's forces was finally brought to a close, and he travelled back to Britain hoping to resume his playing career. Thankfully, he was still a relatively young man after returning from service in the Middle East, and Preston's offer of employment soon tempted him to leave Parkhead for Deepdale.

Docherty became an instant Deepdale favourite, as he succeeded Bill Shankly in the fan's affections.

Docherty had been purchased primarily to replace Bill Shankly, who had retired a year earlier to take up coaching duties with the club's reserve team. It didn't take Docherty long to emulate Shankly's awesome authority on the pitch, as the young Scot developed a similar reputation for no nonsense tackling, and tigerish displays of power. He was quick and firm into the tackle, and also possessed passing qualities which helped turn defence into attack in a flash. Never one to shirk his on-field responsibilities, Docherty became an instant Deepdale favourite, as he succeeded Bill Shankly in the fan's affections.

He made his debut for the club as an emergency outside left against Leeds United on Christmas Eve, 1949, though, not surprisingly, he didn't inspire much in the way of praise from the newspaper writers of the day, having failed to make much of an impression on the wing. He didn't get another first team opportunity until a few weeks later, when he deputised for Tom Finney in an FA Cup replay against Watford, which the Hertfordshire club emerged victorious from, despite the gallant efforts of the emerging Docherty.

As with a lot of things in life, it was third time lucky for Docherty, when he was finally allowed to turn out in his favoured right half position in a league game later that same season. After that positional switch, he never looked back and settled down to a distinguished career in Preston North End's half back line, playing alongside the aforementioned PNE stalwarts, Joe Marston and Willie Forbes.

The Scottish international selectors were hugely impressed with his powerhouse play in Preston's engine room, eventually granting him a total of twenty five Scottish caps, to add to his 324 outings for his club side. Mystifyingly for all North End fans, Docherty put in a transfer request to manager, Cliff Britton, in August 1958, and soon after joined Arsenal for £28,000. Ironically, he was later to suffer the pain and ignominy of a broken leg, which he received whilst playing against his old team-mates in a league game at Highbury.

He later joined Chelsea as senior coach, even turning out for the first team on four occasions when injuries deemed his presence necessary on the pitch. He was eventually appointed caretaker manager of the Stamford Bridge outfit in September 1961, after the departure of previous boss, Ted Drake. After a number of promising results, Docherty was asked to take the job on a permanent basis four months later, and eventually guided Chelsea to unparalleled heights, including three successive appearances in the FA Cup semi-finals, and a place in the 1967 final, where they lost 2-1 to Tottenham Hotspur.

He was to make his name as a manager at a host of clubs, including Rotherham United, Queens Park Rangers, Aston Villa, Porto, Scotland and Manchester United. He rejoined Preston North End in July 1981 as manager, though failed to change the club's fortunes around in the few short months he stayed at Deepdale. But, for a generation of older Preston North End fans, his name will be indelibly linked to the club, not for his short sojourn as manager, but for his sterling work in that famous half back line of the early 1950's.

He was to make his name as a manager at a host of clubs, including Rotherham United, Queens Park Rangers, Aston Villa, Porto, Scotland and Manchester United.
He rejoined Preston North End in July 1981 as manager, though failed to change the club's fortunes around in the few short months he stayed at Deepdale.

Steve Doyle

right half

Port Talbot born, Steve Doyle made his first team debut for Preston North End at the tender age of 16 years, 166 days. When you consider he had only begun playing football at a competitive level just two years earlier, having attended a local comprehensive school which classed rugby as the number one sport for its pupils, Steve made remarkable strides during the intervening twenty four months.

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He had joined the club on schoolboy forms, before signing on as an apprentice a few months later. He played just one youth team game before being promoted to the reserve side. Less than six months after joining the club, he made his first team bow. That initial game saw his side go down 3-1 to Tranmere Rovers, but Doyle left the pitch with praise from both team-mates and opponents ringing in his ears after putting in a performance which totally belied his tender years.

Steve Doyle is pictured middle row, fourth from left.

He went on to win several youth caps for his country, before graduating to the U21 side, where he continued to impress. He eventually left Deepdale, having played in 197 league games and scoring eight goals - not bad for a wing half cum defender! He joined Huddersfield Town in September 1982, and made 161 league appearances for the Leeds Road club, before joining Sunderland, where he played in 100 league games. He ended his playing career with Hull City and Rochdale.

He eventually left Deepdale, having played in 197 league games and scoring eight goals - not bad for a wing half cum defender!

Joe Dunn

centre half

Joe Dunn signed for Preston North End for the princely sum of £1,500 in July 1951, from Scottish club, Clyde. His early years at Deepdale coincided with a fabulous run of form from club stalwart, Willie Forbes. Because of this, the only first team action that Dunn was able to take part in was during the rare occasions that his rival had to bow out through injury.

Dunn made 239 league and cup appearances, though most of them were made during his last five years at the club.

Fate though lent a hand, when a bad leg injury to the former Wolverhampton Wanderers defender allowed Dunn a consecutive run in the first team. He managed to keep his place in the side for twenty five games during the 1952/53 season, but lost it again on Forbes' return to action. It was only when fellow defender, Joe Marston decided to return to his native Australia in May 1955, that a glimmer of hope emerged for Dunn.

The following season, he found himself on regular first team duty for Preston North End, though he may have wished he had stayed in the reserve team during the busy Christmas period of 1955. It began badly, with a 5-0 defeat to Newcastle United on Christmas Eve, and got worse, with five successive defeats meaning that Preston North End were suddenly flirting with relegation. Thankfully, a timely and morale-boosting 3-3 draw against Blackpool at Deepdale later in the season saved the day for Preston North End. Dunn's defensive capabilities during this horrendous run were tested to their limits, but the Scottish stopper came through the test with flying colours, having shown remarkable determination and defensive skills on a regular basis, as he helped the club to hold onto their First Division status.

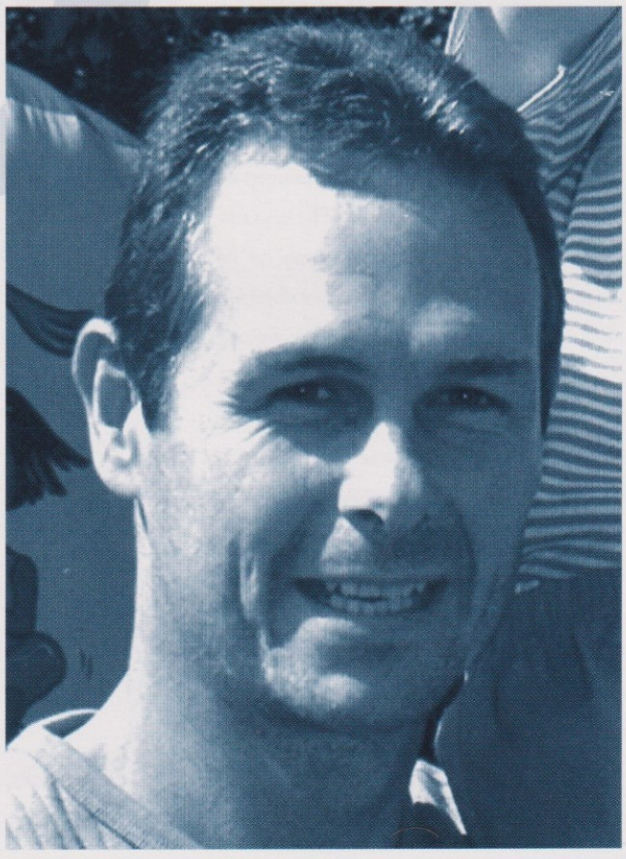
After that nerve-wracking experience, Dunn became the team's regular centre half, and earned himself a reputation as a no-nonsense defender, with good heading and tackling abilities. He stayed in the side right through until the beginning of the 1960/61 season. But, after Preston North End had begun that season badly, losing their opening three games, he was dropped from the team. The next few months were torrid times for Dunn, as he found himself playing reserve team football. It was only when Tony Singleton was injured in February 1961 that he managed to get another first team game. Unfortunately, this belated appearance coincided with a 5-1 defeat to Sheffield Wednesday at Hillsborough. It turned out to be Joe Dunn's final match for Preston North End, though it must be stated that he had served the club with distinction and loyalty for many years. During his Deepdale career, Dunn had made 239 league and cup appearances, though most of them had been made during his last five years at the club.

Steve Elliott

centre forward

Steve Elliott arrived at Deepdale in March 1979 with quite a goalscoring reputation, having already played a considerable part in Nottingham Forest's renaissance under Brian Clough and his assistant, Peter Taylor. During the 1978/79 season, which culminated in a European Cup win for the east Midlands side, Elliott made just four appearances, and was eventually allowed to leave the club after the arrival of Gary Birtles.

He cost Preston North End a then club record fee of £95,000, though a lot of that money was repaid during his first full season at Deepdale. Elliott scored sixteen league goals during that exciting season, and was an ever present in the side. He also topped the goalscoring charts during the 1982/83 season, but sadly, was allowed to leave the club in June 1984, after First Division, Luton Town requested his services.



During his Deepdale career, he played in 208 league games, scoring seventy goals. At Kenilworth Road, things didn't work out exactly to plan, as Elliott struggled for a first team place. He only made twelve first team appearances, before losing his place in the forward line to Mick Harford. He then spent time at Walsall, before moving back north to Bolton Wanderers for £25,000. Things didn't work out at Burnden Park, and he was eventually sold to neighbours, Bury for a £16,000 fee.

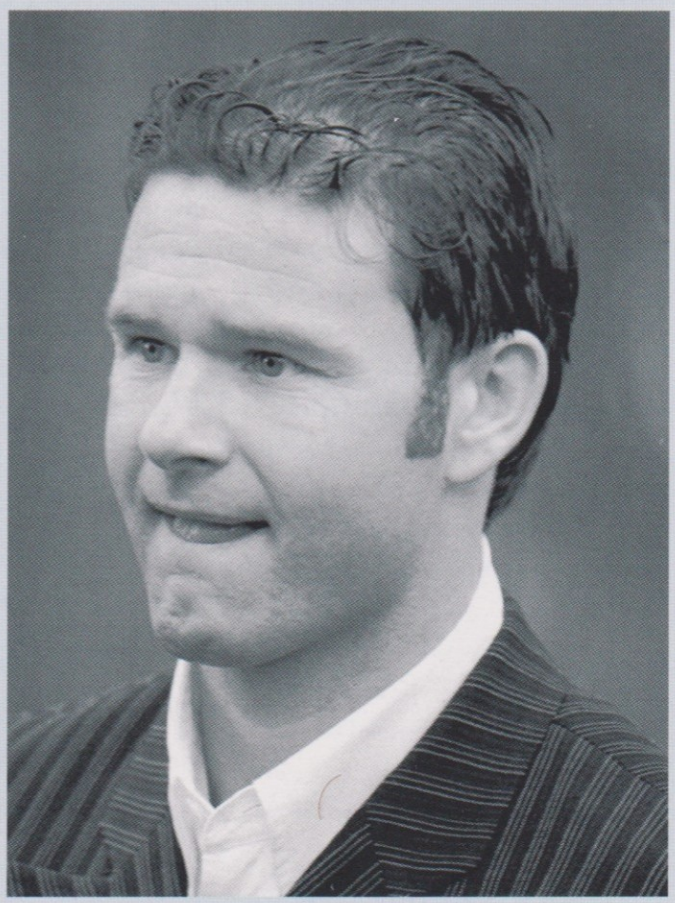
He cost Preston North End a then club record fee of £95,000, though a lot of that money was repaid during his first full season at Deepdale.

Tony Ellis

centre forward

Tony Ellis began his playing career at Oldham Athletic, having been signed as a full-time professional by the Boundary Park outfit in August 1986. Circumstances dictated that Ellis played in just seven first team games for the Latics, before he cut his losses and moved to Preston North End in October 1987, for a fee of £20,000.

The club were later to make a healthy profit on Ellis, when he signed for Stoke City for £250,000 in December 1989, but not before he had stormed opposition defences for Preston North End. Ellis became a real crowd favourite at Deepdale, as he scored thirty two goals in 108 first team appearances, including twenty six goals in eighty eight league games.



Ellis, in a reflective mood at John McGrath's funeral.

His time in the Potteries wasn't a particularly happy one, certainly in terms of playing fortunes, and when the opportunity of rejoining Preston North End arose, he flew at the chance of rekindling his career. During his second stint at Deepdale, his goalscoring form mirrored his earlier achievements, as he went on to find the net forty eight times in seventy two league appearances. He left to join neighbours, Blackpool before the start of the 1994/95 season, much to the chagrin of every Preston North End fan. He has since played for Bury, Stockport County and more recently, Rochdale.

During his second stint at Deepdale, his goalscoring form mirrored his earlier achievements, as he went on to find the net forty eight times in seventy two league appearances.

Fred Else

goalkeeper

1

Fred Else arrived at Deepdale for trials at Easter time in 1953, hoping to secure a professional playing contract with the club. His potential had been spotted by Preston North End scouts whilst he plied his goalkeeping trade with Axwell Park Colliery Welfare FC, during his National Service stint. The goalkeeper impressed enough people during that trial session to be taken on as a professional at the beginning of the 1953/54 season.

Else eventually made his first team debut seven months later, on 6th March 1954, against Manchester City at Deepdale. His big chance had arrived purely through luck, as regular first choice keeper, George Thompson had suffered an injury in the previous game, which had ruled him out of action a couple of days before the City game. His deputy found little to trouble him during his Football League bow, as North End went on the rampage at the opposite end of the pitch, emerging 4-0 victors over their illustrious counterparts.

But, if Fred thought his time had arrived, he was mistaken, because George Thompson, having recovered fully from injury, reclaimed his place between the sticks and stayed there for the next three seasons. In that time, his able deputy was restricted to a mere fourteen league games - an obviously frustrating period in the player's career. Patience was certainly a virtue in Else's case, though, because by season 1956/57, he had finally won a regular place in the team. During his first full season between the sticks, he was an ever present, playing in all forty two league games as Preston finished third in the First Division.

International honours were always near to hand, but unfortunately for Else, none were ever forthcoming, though his consistent displays for Preston North End must have tempted the English selectors to pick him on at least a couple of occasions. If Fred failed to impress the international team selectors, he didn't allow it to spoil his form for his club team, and the fans responded to his superlative displays by adopting him as one of their favourites.

Sadly though, the time finally came for him to leave Deepdale in 1961, when Lancashire neighbours, Blackburn Rovers paid the princely sum of £17,000 to take him to Ewood Park, after he had failed to agree terms with Preston. An interesting point to make about his transfer was that on the very day he signed for his new club, he actually turned out for them that same evening in a pre-season friendly fixture against Preston North End at Deepdale! He eventually made 187 appearances for his new club, before his career came to a close at Barrow.

During his first full season between the sticks, he was an ever present, playing in all forty two league games as Preston finished third in the First Division.

Mike Elwiss

centre forward

Many Preston North End fans, particularly those who remember certain halycon days of the 1970s, will recall the truly terrific striking partnership which Mike Elwiss struck up with Alex Bruce. Space has been duly reserved for Alex Bruce elsewhere in this book, but, as regards his partner in crime upfront, it's true to state that Elwiss was one of the club's finest ever signings.

He was one of manager, Bobby Charlton's first captures, in February 1974. The former Manchester United and England legend had not been long at Deepdale and was keen to bolster his forward line. With this objective in mind, he travelled to Belle Vue, the home of Doncaster Rovers, one damp, chilly evening to take a close look at a striker he had received constant messages about from his scouts. Bobby Charlton, like the club's scouting network, wasn't slow in spotting Elwiss's potential as the player fulfilled every criteria on a mud-heap of a pitch. After the game, Charlton moved swiftly to set up a deal with the Doncaster Rovers' directors to take Elwiss across the Pennines to Preston.

He scored twice in the first half as North End went in for their half time cup of tea two goals to the good.

A strong and aggressive forward, Elwiss was the perfect foil for his more scheming striking partner, as both players quickly began to lay siege to the opposition goal in the early part of their Deepdale careers. Elwiss made his North End debut against Carlisle United at Brunton Park, and what a debut! He scored twice in the first half as North End went in for their half time cup of tea two goals to the good. Unfortunately, the Cumbrian outfit hit back in the second half and finally secured an equaliser late on to deny Preston a point. Lost points or not, Mike Elwiss had made a big impression on everybody connected with the club that afternoon. He continued in fine form, and scored twice more on the final day of the season when Preston North End met an already promoted Middlesbrough side at Deepdale. North End desperately needed to win this game to avoid relegation, but those Elwiss goals weren't enough as the Teeside outfit ran out 4-2 winners, thus condemning Preston North End to the ignominy of relegation.

In 1978, the prolific partnership he had enjoyed with Alex Bruce finally ended when the club accepted a generous offer for his services from Crystal Palace. He became a favourite with the Selhurst Park fans, just as he had done with the Deepdale supporters. Both sets of fans must have been truly saddened some time later when Elwiss suffered a serious knee injury whilst playing in a league game for Palace. The Preston supporters weren't to know then, but their favourite player was on his way back to Deepdale, albeit on loan, and went on to play a huge part in North End's renaissance as that season drew to a close. He played in the last eight games of the season, and scored two priceless goals at Filbert Street against Leicester City, which secured a timely and well deserved 2-1 success for Preston North End. Sadly, because of recurring injuries, Elwiss, who was still only in his mid 20's had to retire.

11 David Eyres

outside left

David Eyres began his professional football career relatively late. Until his early 20's, the winger was still earning a living working in Fords Halewood car factory, whilst turning out for the work's team on Sunday mornings.

At that time, he was also turning out for Welsh league team Rhyl, before deciding to take advantage of Blackpool's offer to turn full-time professional. Giving up his day job in Liverpool, Eyres quickly adapted to the rigours of league football at Bloomfield Road. He later moved to Burnley, where he gave sterling service to the Turf Moor outfit, highlighted by appearing in a Play-off final at Wembley with the club.

He arrived at Deepdale in 1997, and soon began to make his mark with a series of highly skilled displays on the left flank. Eyres is highly adaptable too, flitting between left wing and left back whenever the occasion demands. A great crosser of the ball, with the innate ability to beat any full back, the Preston winger's style of play is a welcome hark back to those far-off days when dribbling skills were commonplace.

In 1999, he was awarded the honour of Goal of the Season for a blistering effort against Wigan at Springfield Park in March 1999.

Eyres is highly adaptable too, flitting between left wing and left back whenever the occasion demands.

Jack Fairbrother

goalkeeper

1

Though this book concerns itself with Preston North End's greatest post-war players, it's only fair to include Jack Fairbrother, who plied his trade with Preston both before and after the Second World War.

He also played with a distinct smile on his face, which endeared him to the Preston North End fans.

He was originally signed as a youngster from Burton Town in March 1937, with a view to the club educating him into the rigours and responsibilities of first team football within the next couple of years. Harry Holdcroft was the regular first choice goalkeeper in those days, though early promise was shown by Fairbrother in reserve team games.

As time passed by, his form began to elevate him into the minds of the fans and the manager, who realised the time was ripe to give the youngster a chance of first team glory. Unfortunately, as happened with so many good men, war took a firm grip of the situation in the early days of September 1939. As a result, Jack Fairbrother's debut for Preston North End didn't arrive until the opening game of the 1946/47 season. The date was 31st August, and both Fairbrother and Tom Finney were making their debuts for the club, against Leeds United at Deepdale. Their dual presence helped to inspire the team to a narrow but resounding 3-2 success over the Yorkshire club.

During that initial season between the Preston North End posts, Fairbrother played in forty one league games, conceding seventy five goals. Twenty five of those goals were conceded in his first fourteen games during that first post-war campaign. He was subsequently dropped, but returned to the first team later in the season; he never looked back after that. He was an agile goalkeeper, who also possessed great shot-stopping ability. He also played with a distinct smile on his face, which endeared him to the Preston North End fans. By this time, he had established himself in the first team, and looked set fair to hold this prestigious position for many seasons to come, until Newcastle United came a-knocking on Deepdale's doors, with a view to taking him to St James Park. After deliberating for a short period, the club decided to let him leave, with the North East club paying £7,000 for his services. Many Preston North End fans were incensed at his departure, but Fairbrother could argue he had the last laugh, as he helped the Magpies to a famous FA Cup success in 1951.

Preston North End 1946/47
(Back row) A. Beattie, Shankly, Fairbrother, Watson, Williams, Scott. (Front row) Finney, Mutch, McIntosh, R. Beattie, Dougal.

Sadly, he passed away in October 1999, at his home in Northants, aged 82.

Sir Tom Finney

outside right

So many eulogies, plaudits and bouquets have already been paid to Sir Tom Finney that it is extremely difficult to find new words to describe the sheer impact he had as a player with Preston North End Football Club. Put simply, he was a footballing genius, the likes of which we may never see again during our lifetimes. Finney was a revelation in an era when skilled footballers were in bountiful supply.

Don't forget, for much of that time, certainly during the early 1950's, England possessed most of the world's best footballers. The likes of Stanley Matthews, Stan Mortensen and Tommy Lawton had helped forge a powerful renaissance for English soccer with their brilliance for both club and country. Finney though, was a prince amongst them all.

For younger supporters, those born too late to have witnessed Finney's searing brilliance at first hand, we have to rely on second hand accounts of his exploits from older supporters, or by reading about his career in various books which have been written in his honour since he retired from playing in April 1960. These personalised accounts rightly dwell on Finney's remarkable footballing talent, but invariably, they also dwell on other worldly qualities which he possessed in abundance, such as his modest attitude, his

For those of you lucky enough to have met Sir Tom Finney in person, you will know how down to earth and approachable the man actually is.

humility, and his common sense approach to life. For those of you lucky enough to have met Sir Tom Finney in person, you will know how down to earth and approachable the man actually is. This is the man who stole the hearts of supporters the length and breadth of the British Isles and the world beyond during a career which began and ended at Preston North End. He was the finest asset the club ever possessed, and even though he was the scourge of every team he played against, the supporters of those teams still rightly hailed him as the genius he undoubtedly was, as of course did the fans of Preston North End. But, despite the adulation, Sir Tom retains the same modest demeanour he had as a player. Not for him the glamourous lifestyles of some of today's highly paid professionals; Finney was one of the finest ambassadors the game has ever known, carrying out his duties off the pitch as unerringly as he had done on it.

Much in demand from an adoring public after he finally retired from the game, Finney was always ready, willing and able to lend his name and presence to charity functions and other such worthy ventures. He also found time to build up a thriving business, as well as being a devoted husband and father to Elsie and their two children. He is also President of Preston North End Football Club, and was finally awarded his long awaited knighthood in the 1998 New Years Honours List, a recognition which many thought should have arrived years earlier.

Whilst we dwell on Finney the man, as opposed to Finney the footballer, allow me to recount the following tale, recently told to the author by an Everton fan called Davie Abrahams. The year was 1966, and Everton were playing in that season's FA Cup semi-final against Manchester United at Burnden Park, the home of Bolton Wanderers. Everton won the game with a Colin Harvey goal, thus securing a hard won cup final place at Wembley against Sheffield Wednesday. As the vast crowds began to depart the stadium, this chap had a close encounter he will never forget. Nearing the official entrance on his way back to Bolton railway station, he accidentally barged into Tom Finney as the Preston legend was walking through the car-park. Apologising for his clumsiness, the Everton fan suddenly realised he was standing next to one of his footballing heroes. The two men struck up a short conversation, and during the minute or two that followed, Davie described to Tom the difficulty he now faced in trying to secure a cup final ticket. Tom agreed it would be difficult to get hold of one but wished him luck in his quest. A few weeks later, and Davie was being proved right - he couldn't get hold of a ticket for love nor money. As a last resort, he wrote to Tom, addressing the envelope thus; To Tom Finney, Preston North End Football Club, Deepdale, Preston. In the letter, he reminded Tom of their meeting, and respectfully asked if he knew of anybody who might have a spare ticket. Davie knew it was a long shot, but by this time, seven days before the game, he was getting desperate. A few days later, a letter arrived at Davie's house, with a Preston postmark printed in the top right hand corner. He opened it to find a cup final ticket lying inside, and a short note from Tom accompanying it, wishing him and his team good luck in the final. It's fair to say, there wasn't a happier Evertonian in Liverpool that day.

If Tom Finney displayed remarkable kindness to that football fan, he showed very little to

opposition defences during his long career with Preston North End and England. He originally made his debut for the club at the age of fifteen, playing for the junior side at outside right against Manchester United juniors. He registered as a professional in January 1940, before embarking on a war-time career, which combined war-time duties with the occasional game of football. He won a War-time Cup Winners medal, as Preston North End defeated Arsenal in the Football League War Cup Final, after a thrilling replay at Ewood Park. Finney had enraptured the crowd with his skill and finesse, both in the original game at Wembley and in that second encounter. Eddie Hapgood, the vastly experienced Arsenal defender, had a torrid time during both games, as he tried to quell the threat which the young Finney posed to his team. He didn't succeed.

In 1945, Finney received his first international call-up, when he was selected to play in an FA XI against Switzerland in Zurich. A few months later, he made his Football League debut against Leeds United at Deepdale, an historic occasion in more ways than one, as it marked the resumption of competitive football in England after World War II. Finney got his name on the scoresheet during that game, as he was to do on many occasions during his long career at the club. He made his full international debut for England against Northern Ireland in Belfast in September 1946, and managed to score a goal. In total, he made seventy six

appearances for his country, scoring thirty goals in the process.

Tom's career at Preston North End was similarly successful. His wing magic delighted and enthralled the Deepdale crowd for twenty one glorious years. He was twice voted Footballer of the Year by the Football Writers Association, and helped Preston North End achieve heights they had rarely accomplished since the days of the Invincibles in the 1800's. After retiring from the game, Tom concentrated on building his plumbing business up, though remarkably, was persuaded to return for a one-off competitive game by Irish club, Distillery, when they were drawn against the crack Portuguese side, Benfica in the European Cup in 1963. Tom was understandably reluctant to take part, not having played or trained on a regular basis for the past three years, but the Irish club's manager, George Eastham simply wouldn't take no for an answer. Eventually, Tom relented and travelled over to Ireland to meet his new team-mates, just a few days before the first leg. Eastham played him at centre forward, and the former Preston North End legend didn't let anybody down as he valiantly led the Distillery forward line against their much vaunted opponents, which included the fabulously talented, Eusebio. Tom wasn't required for the second leg in Lisbon, having told George Eastham that whatever the result in the first leg, he wouldn't be able to play because of pressing family and business commitments. It had been a unique way to end his career, which, to all intents and purposes, had ended almost three years earlier, when the Deepdale crowd had given him a rapturous and emotional send-off in his final game against Luton Town. That momentous afternoon has lived long in the memory of anybody who was present that day. After a rousing rendition of Auld Lang Syne in the centre circle before the game, with all twenty two players and match officials forming a circle of honour, Tom played out his final ninety minutes in a Preston North End shirt. Immediately after the game, he stood on a hastily erected podium, near the players tunnel, and addressed the vast crowd, thousands of whom had encroached onto the pitch in an effort to get closer to their hero. During his message, he thanked the fans for their support, thanked his team-mates, club staff, and the Luton Town players for helping to make his final day so special. He then bade his last farewell, before departing the Deepdale stage for the final time.

It's left to another Preston North End legend, the late Bill Shankly to have the final word on Tom Finney. When asked by a reporter to describe Finney's contribution for both Preston North End and England, he replied: "If I were pressed into it, I would say that Tom Finney was the best player ever born." It's hard to disagree.

His wing magic delighted and enthralled the Deepdale crowd for twenty one glorious years.

Mike Flynn

centre half

5

Oldham born, Mike Flynn was initially picked up by his home town club during the mid-1980s. After showing great promise in their first team during the early part of his career, he eventually made the long trek to East Anglia to join Norwich City in a big money deal.

Unfortunately for both player and his new club, things didn't work out at Carrow Road, and Flynn left soon afterwards, having failed to play in a single first team game. Preston North End, eyeing the situation from far-off Lancashire, saw an ideal opportunity and swooped to sign the cultured defender before any other club could lay claim to his services. Flynn arrived amidst a glare of publicity in December 1990, having become the club's most expensive player at a price of £125,000.

He made his league debut for Preston North End at St Andrews later that month, though his initial appearance for the Whites wasn't a happy occasion as Birmingham City ran out 3-1 victors. Flynn must have impressed though, because he went on to play in thirty five games that season. He eventually made 136 league appearances for the club, before leaving Deepdale to join Stockport County, whom he helped win promotion to Division One. He was still at Edgeley Park at the start of the 1999/2000 season.

Flynn arrived amidst a glare of publicity in December 1990, having become the club's most expensive player at a price of £125,000.

He formed a third of the trio of players who formed what was arguably, Preston North End's most famous half back line in the club's history.

Willie Forbes

left half

Left half, Willie Forbes joined Preston North End from Wolverhampton Wanderers for £18,000 in December 1949, and spent the following six seasons at Deepdale. During his time at the club, Willie became known and respected for his fiery style of play in the centre of the pitch.

Unfortunately, his fiery temper once got him into serious trouble with football's rulers, when the FA, in their wisdom, suspended the Glasgow born playmaker for his part in a feud with Alec Venters of Blackburn Rovers during a vital Championship deciding match.

Many opposition players fought shy of coming into physical contact with Willie during a game, but his all-action style made him one of the most respected stoppers around at that time. He formed a third of the trio of players who formed what was arguably, Preston North End's most famous half back line in the club's history, along with Tommy Docherty and Joe Marston. This trio of gifted footballers formed the backbone of the side during those glorious years of the early 1950s.

Willie wasn't just a stopper, though. He could also play a bit, possessing a powerful shot, firm heading abilities, as well as his famed tackling skills, which put fear into the heart of any forward who had the temerity to challenge his reputation in the area of the pitch he patrolled. His defensive capabilities were famed throughout the Football League, but the Scottish selectors were never enamoured enough to include him in any of their national squads, unlike his half back colleagues, Docherty and Marston, who were both included in Scotland and Australia's squads on many occasions.

Forbes possessed tremendous stamina, and a will to win which helped inspire his team-mates on numerous occasions when the chips were down. He was an ever-present member of the team during the 1950/51 season, and continued to serve the club until 1956, having played 191 league games for Preston North End during his seven year stay at Deepdale. He eventually made the journey north to Carlisle United, and played 25 league games for them, before dipping his toe into football management, becoming player/manager at non league Fleetwood for a spell. Willie eventually returned to the Preston area, having forsaken his chance of stardom in football management, having realised that it wasn't for him.

Bobby Foster

inside right

Bobby Foster arrived at Deepdale in 1951 from Chesterfield, after Preston North End manager, Will Scott had decided he could utilise the services of a player who was guaranteed to score and create goals for his new team.

An articulate and intelligent player, Foster epitomised the forward thinking and creative artistry which Preston North End were renowned for throughout football. He also had an instinctive eye for goal, which resulted in him scoring forty two goals in 110 league appearances for the club.

Alternating between different forward positions, Foster was able to show off his full gamut of skills to an appreciative crowd. He also deputised for Tom Finney on a few occasions, and it was during one of these appearances that Foster helped himself to four goals in just five games for the club whilst playing at outside right. He continued to contribute to the Preston North End cause, until the club relinquished their ties with Foster by selling him to Rotherham United in a deal which also took team-mate, Ken Waterhouse to Millmoor in 1958.

He also deputised for Tom Finney on a few occasions, and it was during one of these appearances that Foster helped himself to four goals in just five games for the club whilst playing at outside right.

Archie Gemmill

inside left

European Cup winning player, Archie Gemmill first arrived in England from St Mirren in June 1967, for £16,000. The team he signed for was Preston North End. Though only 5ft 5ins in height, Archie was one of the most combative midfield players of the 1970's and 80's.

He played in ninety nine games for Preston North End, before leaving to join First Division, Derby County. During his time at the club, he got his name on the Deepdale scoresheet on thirteen occasions.

The Scot found himself under the employ of Brian Clough at the Baseball Ground, and played a highly significant part in proceedings, as the Rams won the League title in 1972, even though Archie, along with the rest of his team-mates, were lying on a Spanish beach at the time, having already completed their fixtures, as rivals Arsenal and Liverpool fought in vain to snatch the title from their clutches.

At Derby, he played in 261 league games, before making the move across the East Midlands to Nottingham Forest, where his former manager, Clough was already building a European Cup winning side. He later joined Birmingham City, before turning out for Wigan Athletic for a spell. He eventually rejoined Derby, before retiring from the game.

Archie won forty three caps for Scotland, and played in the 1978 World Cup finals in Germany, scoring one of the wonder goals of the tournament in a World Cup First Round tie against Holland.

During his time at the club, he got his name on the Deepdale scoresheet on thirteen occasions.

Brian Godfrey

inside right

Brian Godfrey joined Preston North End in October 1963 from Rotherham United. He had originally begun his career with Everton, but only managed one first team appearance for the Goodison Park club, before upping sticks for Millmoor.

Godfrey's partner in crime upfront was the Black Prince, aka, Alex Dawson, and between them they managed to score sixty one of Preston North End's total of seventy six goals that season.

Godfrey was a prolific goalscorer for Preston North End, as shown by his total figures for the 1964/65 season, as he scored twenty goals in thirty seven league appearances - an excellent return for a player who had arrived at Deepdale for a relatively nominal fee. During that exciting campaign, Godfrey's partner in crime upfront was the Black Prince, aka, Alex Dawson, and between them they managed to score sixty one of Preston North End's total of seventy six goals that season. The records continued to be broken during the following season, as Godfrey netted the club's fastest ever hat-trick, when he banged in three goals in five minutes as Preston North End crushed Cardiff City 9-0.

In October 1967, four years after arriving at Deepdale, Godfrey was transferred to Aston Villa, along with Brian Greenhalgh. He stayed at Villa Park for four years, continuing to score goals as if they were going out of fashion. His goalscoring record for Preston North End was similarly impressive, with fifty two goals scored in 122 league appearances. After leaving Villa Park, he played for two other clubs, Bristol Rovers and Newport County, before hanging up his boots.

There were many games when he performed brilliantly, to the point where he was hailed as a hero.

Jimmy Gooch

goalkeeper

Preston North End have been blessed with great goalkeepers throughout their history, and another name to add to that formidable list of venerable keepers is Jimmy Gooch. He was a charismatic and popular goalkeeper, who could be brilliant one moment, and totally erratic the next. But, his overall form for the team elevated him to the pantheon of players who, through their heroic deeds, captured the imagination of the Deepdale public.

Gooch was a tall, angular goalkeeper, who replaced the popular Jack Fairbrother in the Preston North End line-up, after the latter player had been controversially transferred to rivals, Newcastle United in July 1947. We mentioned his occasionally erratic form just now, and this blip on Gooch's otherwise exemplary form was highlighted in graphic detail during a 4-3 defeat to Derby County at the Baseball Ground in the late 1940s, when he was severely criticised for his performance. Gooch though, was not a man to allow such disappointments to cloud his confidence for long. There were many games when he performed brilliantly, to the point where he was hailed as a hero.

He also had to contend with a variety of career threatening injuries, which, for a time, curtailed his stint between the Preston North End posts. In particular, a trio of games stand out in this respect; a game against Manchester United, which was played at Maine Road, the home of their greatest rivals, because Old Trafford was still being rebuilt after sustaining massive damage through air-raids in the Second World War. Gooch hurt his shoulder quite badly during the game, though recovered in time to play in the following fixture, a league game against local rivals, Blackburn Rovers at Deepdale. He aggravated the injury to such an extent in that particular fixture, that he was forced to miss Preston North End's next few games. During the following season, the team travelled to Maine Road for a league game against Manchester City, and after just four minutes Gooch was carried off with a dislocated shoulder, an injury which forced him to have an immediate operation in Manchester Royal Infirmary.

After that further sickening blow, the London born goalkeeper was never really able to capture his previous form. By the 1950/51 season, and after Preston North End had suffered the ignominy of a 4-2 defeat against Manchester City, he was dropped from the team. Determined as he was though, Gooch defied his critics by returning to the side during the club's promotion run. But, he eventually decided to seek pastures new, and left Deepdale in July 1953 to join Bradford City.

Alan Gowling

centre forward

There was a time, not so long ago, when professional footballer's with O Level qualifications to their name, would automatically be nicknamed Bamber by their dressing room colleagues, an inference to the famous quizmaster on TV show, University Challenge. Heaven knows what Alan Gowling's team-mates must have dubbed him when they realised he held an Honours Degree in Economics - Super Bamber, maybe?

As a youngster, Alan's parents had insisted he finish his education, aware of the importance of educational qualifications, even though their son had set his heart on becoming a professional footballer. Alan took his parent's advice, and got on with his studies, whilst continuing to play football, albeit as an amateur. Having eventually gained that all-important educational certificate, Alan Gowling then embarked on a professional playing career.

Gowling in action for Bolton Wanderers (Number 11), against North End, whom he later joined.

He played for Manchester United, and held the captaincy for a spell during the early 1970s, before eventually being transferred to Huddersfield Town in June 1972. He performed well at Leeds Road, scoring 58 goals in 128 league games, but left to join Newcastle United during the closing stages of 1975. He really came into his own during his sojourn at St James Park, playing alongside bustling forward, Malcolm MacDonald. He ended up leading goalscorer for the Magpies, and appeared at Wembley in the League Cup Final. But, in March 1978, he joined Bolton Wanderers, where he showed his versatility by playing in various positions, including centre forward, midfield and centre half.

A leading member of the burgeoning Professional Footballers Association for the previous few years, rising to Chairman eventually, Alan gave that role up when leaving Burnden Park for Deepdale during the summer of 1982. He signed on as a part-time professional, and figured in forty league games for Preston North End, scoring five goals, before retiring to concentrate on his growing Timber Importing Agency in Bolton.

Alan took his parent's advice, and got on with his studies, whilst continuing to play football, albeit as an amateur.

Sean Gregan

centre midfield

This most popular of players signed for Preston North End for a £300,000 fee during the latter days of November 1996, and made a dramatic and timely debut in a televised Friday night derby fixture against arch-rivals, Blackpool, just a few days later. As the SKY TV cameras recorded that resounding 3-0 success for Preston North End, most of the attention was focussed upon the team's twin strike force of Gary Bennett and David Reeves, but back in defence, Gregan strode around that vital area of the pitch as if he owned it.

Nothing got past him during that memorable night, much to the chagrin of the Seasider's attackers. As Gregan's confidence grew during that initial outing in the white shirt of Preston North End, he began instigating attack upon attack, to the point where Blackpool's midfield and defensive ranks began to creak under the constant pressure. It was a tremendous debut for the youngster, and help set standards which team-mates, management and fans have come to expect from Sean Gregan ever since that memorable night.

He has also taken on the captain's mantle during his Deepdale career, and this is a responsibility which he carries with tremendous effort and enthusiasm.

He began his league career with Third Division side, Darlington, having been born and brought up in that part of the world, and quickly established a reputation as a firm tackling, creative midfielder with the North East club. Since his move to Deepdale, Gregan has managed to adapt to the vagaries of modern-day football, by easily slotting into a defensive role when circumstances have dictated through injury or suspensions to team-mates. He has also taken on the captain's mantle during his Deepdale career, and this is a responsibility which he carries with tremendous effort and enthusiasm. Gregan's presence is a shining light whenever the chips are down, and he can be relied upon always to provide total effort and commitment to the Preston North End cause.

8 Bobby Ham

inside right

A £7,750 arrival from Bradford City in October 1970, Bobby Ham soon became a particular crowd favourite at Deepdale, mainly because of his goalscoring form. He scored on his debut, just five days after signing for the club, against Plymouth Argyle at Home Park.

The goals continued to flow as he got his name on the scoresheet in the next three games for North End. Bobby Ham's arrival could be classified as timely, because the team only lost three games in the season after his arrival.

Another interesting statistic concerning Bobby Ham is that Preston North End never lost a game when he scored. Though the forward never managed to score more than one goal in a single game, his predatory instincts were rightly hailed by fans and pundits alike.

After gaining promotion to the Second Division, and a mere 13 games into the new season, the club allowed Ham to join Rotherham United. Two years later, he rejoined Bradford City, his original club.

Another interesting statistic concerning Bobby Ham is that Preston North End never lost a game when he scored.

Dennis Hatsell

centre forward

It was little wonder that Dennis Hatsell was spotted by Preston North End, having played his football in Preston for various junior sides, before finally signing apprentice forms with the club in the early 1950's. Hatsell showed immense promise as a forward almost from the day he signed for the club.

His rapid progress continued apace, as he quickly began to make a name for himself as a prolific goalscorer. He progressed through the B team, the A team and the reserves, where he scored goals almost for fun, before being given his first team bow. And what a game to make your debut in - a league clash against Manchester United at a packed and noisy Old Trafford. He replaced the injured Bobby Foster in that exciting game in September 1953, and performed well, though didn't manage to get his name on the scoresheet.

But, two games later, he managed to bag a brace of goals during Preston North End's 3-2 defeat against Arsenal at Highbury. He completed that season having scored eleven goals in seventeen games. Five first team outings later, and Hatsell was selected for an FA XI side, in recognition of his tremendous club form.

His rapid progress continued apace, as he quickly began to make a name for himself as a prolific goalscorer.

A curious aspect of the forward's Deepdale career was that after appearing in 115 league games, and having scored fifty four goals, he found himself playing for Chelmsford City, a non-league team. No doubt, Preston North End had their own reasons for letting him leave, but nevertheless, a lot of fans thought the club's decision to part company with Hatsell was an ill-thought move, especially with the club lurching through a major transitional period.

5

Graham Hawkins

centre half

At the tender age of 22, Graham Hawkins took over the captaincy of Preston North End, thus becoming one of the club's youngest ever captains. The central defender began his career with Wolverhampton Wanderers, making his debut in a local derby fixture against West Bromwich Albion.

He joined Preston North End in January 1968, as a replacement for Tony Singleton. Unfortunately, on his debut for the club he suffered an injury which curtailed his first team appearances for a spell.

He soon returned, and became an integral figure in Preston North End's defence. He played in 245 league games for the club, and became a firm favourite with the Deepdale crowd. They appreciated his no nonsense approach to defensive responsibilities, his ability to avert danger, and the obtrusive way he created havoc in opposition defences, particularly at set-piece situations.

He left Deepdale to join neighbours, Blackburn Rovers in June 1974, and eventually made 109 league appearances for the Ewood Park club. He later left Lancashire, to finish his career with Port Vale.

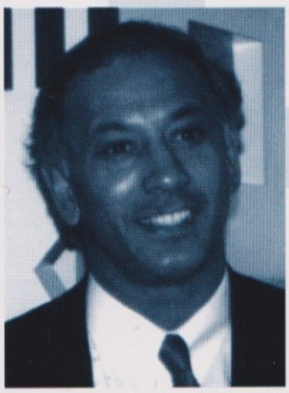
He played in 245 league games for the club, and became a firm favourite with the Deepdale crowd.

Ricky Heppolette

left half

Ricky Heppolette signed for Preston North End at the age of fifteen years, and five months, such was his potential talent as a footballer. He was actually born in India, though came to this country at an early age.

He quickly found his forte in football, and turned out for Bolton Lads Club, and also had trials for Lancashire Schoolboys. Making a name for himself in the Lancashire area meant that Preston North End's scouting system was soon alerted to the immense promise of the youngster, and after little deliberation he was invited to Preston. Ricky Heppolette liked what he saw at Deepdale, and quickly agreed to sign for the club.



He made his Football League debut for Preston North End during the 1967/68 season, at the age of eighteen. An interesting statistic to emerge from his debut, was that Heppolette, as soon as he stepped onto the pitch, became the first ever Indian born player to play in the Football League. A fine midfielder, possessing silky smooth passing skills and an eye for goal, Heppolette soon became a real asset to Preston North End with his midfield roamings. The fans appreciated his massive contribution too, as he quickly forged a firm hold on their affections with his consistently good form. He played in 154 league games for the club, before being transferred to Leyton Orient in December 1972. He played in 113 league games for Orient, followed by stints with Crystal Palace and Chesterfield, before finishing his playing career with Peterborough United.

A fine midfielder, possessing silky smooth passing skills and an eye for goal, Heppolette soon became a real asset to Preston North End with his midfield roamings.

Doug Holden

left winger

Doug Holden had already made quite a name for himself in the professional game before he joined Preston North End in November 1962. His initial game for his first club, Bolton Wanderers came when he was just seventeen years of age, and what a debut he faced; a league game against Liverpool at Anfield.

He starred in Preston North End's FA Cup semi-final win over Swansea City in 1964, and scored in the 3-2 defeat by West Ham United in the final.

Holden and the rest of his team-mates came through that test with flying colours as they managed to hold the Reds to a highly commendable 1-1 draw. That was in November 1951. He later played on the right wing in the Matthews Final, the Wembley showdown of 1953, between Bolton Wanderers and Blackpool. He also played in the 1958 FA Cup Final against Manchester United, and won Football League representative honours as well as five full international caps for England.

A fast, skillful winger, Doug soon settled into his normal routine at Deepdale, beating full backs and setting up chances for his team-mates. He starred in Preston North End's FA Cup semi-final win over Swansea City in 1964, and scored in the 3-2 defeat by West Ham United in the final. Although, not a regular goalscorer, Doug still managed to get his name on the scoresheet on numerous occasions for the club. He ended his career at Deepdale, before emigrating to Australia in 1965, where he finished up qualifying and playing for the Australian national side.

Preston v Northampton: Holden (bent over) slams home Preston's winning goal.

In total, Ingram scored forty goals in 110 league games for the club.

Gerry Ingram

centre forward

Hull born, Gerry Ingram first made his mark in the game as a free scoring forward in the local Humberside junior leagues. Rather surprisingly, his talent for scoring goals was spotted, not by the town's professional club, but by local amateur side, Hull Brunswick.

He continued to bang in the goals in this sphere of football, before he was asked to join Blackpool by manager, Stan Mortensen. It was the former England international's first signing for the club, and what a signing! In his initial season upfront for the Seasiders, Ingram finished up as the club's joint top goalscorer, with eighteen goals from thirty appearances.

Preston North End had been watching the Ingram/Blackpool situation with a keen eye, and when the opportunity of signing the prolific forward arrived, they didn't hesitate to bring him to Deepdale in September 1968. Maybe big-match nerves initially got the better of Ingram, because his early days at the club were fraught with inconsistency in front of goal. But, as time went on, and confidence returned, Ingram suddenly found his form once more. He ended up as Preston North End's leading goalscorer in the 1970/71 season, with twenty two goals scored in thirty nine league appearances. In total, Ingram scored forty goals in 110 league games for the club. He eventually left Deepdale to join Yorkshire side, Bradford City, where his form in front of goal continued apace. He finished his Valley Parade career, having scored sixty goals in 174 league outings, before finally retiring from professional soccer.

Willie Irvine

centre forward

Willie made the short trip to Deepdale from his previous club, Burnley in March 1968, for a fee of £45,000, and very quickly became a folk hero to North End fans. Particularly so, after his debut against Aston Villa at Deepdale, when scoring in a 2-1 success just a few days after signing for the club.

Preston had been struggling up to that point in the season, having only managed to secure three victories from twenty league games. If the club thought they had turned the corner with the timely arrival of Irvine, they were heading towards paradise after the following game, when North End demolished Huddersfield Town 3-1, with Irvine scoring a hat-trick.

Without word nor warning, Preston North End's dismal season had suddenly been transformed in the space of two games, and they found themselves with lots more to cheer as the club went on to record an eight game unbeaten run which took them to mid-table security after initially flirting with relegation. Irvine managed to finish that season, 1966/67, with six goals on the board, which meant he finished the campaign as the club's second highest goalscorer.

By the early part of the 1967/68 season, Irvine had found his goalscoring touch in a big way, scoring sixteen goals in the first seventeen games. It was a good job for North End that he had found his touch, because once again the team were struggling for points, and Irvine had his work cut out to keep pace with the goals being conceded as he continued to bang them in at the other end of the pitch.

The striker had already won international honours with Northern Ireland before joining Preston North End, but added to his already considerable international tally by gaining a further three caps whilst with the club. He got his name on the scoresheet for Northern Ireland on two occasions whilst a player at Preston North End.

After receiving a nasty knee injury in a cup game against Chelsea in the 1969/70 season, he spent the next couple of months recuperating, but after recovering was sent out on loan to Brighton & Hove Albion, where he eventually settled in August 1971.

By the early part of the 1967/68 season, Irvine had found his goalscoring touch in a big way, scoring sixteen goals in the first seventeen games.

Michael Jackson

centre half

Michael Jackson arrived at Deepdale in March 1997, having been signed by Gary Peters. Preston North End's former manager obviously had a good eye for a bargain, because Jackson has since become one of the club's most prized assets.

A powerful defender, who likes nothing better than getting forward in support of attack, especially at set-pieces, Jackson has become a real crowd favourite at Deepdale. This was highlighted at the end of the 1998/99 season when he picked up the Supporter's Player of the Year, and Player's Player of the Year awards, in an emotional presentation evening at Deepdale. His form during that season had been truly phenomenal, as he helped Preston North End's push for a subsequent play-off place.

A very firm tackler and tremendous header of the ball, Jackson has also weighed in with one or two crucial goals in recent seasons, mainly with his head.

Jackson originally signed from Bury for £125,000 on transfer deadline day, and made his Preston North End debut against Notts County at Deepdale soon afterwards. He had already made over 100 appearances for the Greater Manchester club before arriving in west Lancashire, and it showed, as he slotted comfortably into the centre back position. A very firm tackler and tremendous header of the ball, Jackson has also weighed in with one or two crucial goals in recent seasons, mainly with his head. A quiet and extremely likeable player, Jackson will strive to use his undoubted playing skills to help elevate Preston North End into the upper echelons of the league during the next few seasons.

Nigel Jemson

striker

Preston born, Nigel Jemson was a prolific goalscorer at schoolboy level, before Preston North End stepped in to sign him as a junior. He made rapid progress through the youth and reserve team ranks at Deepdale, before making his first team debut on the last day of the 1985/86 season, when he came on as a sixteen year old substitute in the 4-0 defeat away to Aldershot.

Nine months later, in January 1987, he played his first full game for Preston North End, scoring a tremendous goal in the 1-1 draw against Swansea City at the Vetch Field. He also scored in the following two matches, against Lincoln City and Halifax Town, ending the season with five goals in twenty seven appearances.

Unfortunately for Preston North End fans, Brian Clough, who was manager of former European Cup holders, Nottingham Forest at the time, had seen the huge potential of the youngster, and so, after just thirty two games in a Preston North End shirt, Nigel Jemson signed for the east Midlands club for £150,000. That potential, which Cloughie had wisely spotted, was soon realised as Jemson hit the winning goal in Forest's League Cup Final win over Oldham Athletic at Wembley. He later won an England U21 cap, as reward for his consistent efforts for his new club.

He later had loan spells at Bolton Wanderers and Preston North End, before making a cash move to Sheffield Wednesday in September 1991. He scored nine goals in fifty one appearances for the Owls, before leaving to join Notts County. Later in his career, Jemson was loaned out to various clubs, including Grimsby Town, Watford, Coventry City and Rotherham United, before signing for Oxford United for £60,000 in July 1996.

He made rapid progress through the youth and reserve team ranks at Deepdale before making his first team debut on the last day of the 1985/86 season, when he came on as a sixteen year old substitute in the 4-0 defeat away to Aldershot.

Warren Joyce

central midfield

A true battler would be the best way to describe Warren Joyce. He joined Preston North End from Bolton Wanderers in October 1987, for £35,000, having already won various honours with the Burnden Park club.

He had held down a regular place in their side for the previous six seasons, and came to Deepdale with plenty of top level experience. He was soon made captain, and became a real crowd favourite with the Preston fans, especially when they witnessed his never say die attitude on the pitch.

He played a total of 177 league games for the club, scoring thirty four goals in the process. He later joined Plymouth Argyle, but was unable to settle down on the south coast and eventually returned to the area to play for Burnley. He started the 1999/2000 season as player/manager of Third Division, Hull City.

He was soon made captain, and became a real crowd favourite with the Preston fans, especially when they witnessed his never say die attitude on the pitch.

Alan Kelly *Senior*

goalkeeper

One of Preston North End's most famous players. Alan Kelly arrived from Irish club, Drumcondra in 1958, with a reputation for solidity, agility and excellent shot stopping abilities. He had to wait until the 1960/61 season before finally breaking into the first team at Deepdale, but when he did he showed what he could do in no uncertain manner.

He replaced Fred Else, who had to miss the game through illness, in a Fourth Round FA Cup tie against Swansea City at the Vetch Field. He performed heroically during the ninety minutes, though any praise he received after the game was in stark contrast to his next game four days later. It was Kelly's league debut, the venue, Hillsbrough, home of Sheffield Wednesday. North End went down that day by five goals to one.

He played in 447 league games for North End, and made sixty five cup appearances during his seventeen year stint at Deepdale, thus setting the record for appearances of any Preston North End player, both before or since.

If that duo of games had served as a baptism of fire, then Kelly soon put them at the back of his mind, as he settled down to a long and highly distinguished career in goal for Preston North End. He played in 447 league games for North End, and made sixty five cup appearances during his seventeen year stint at Deepdale, thus setting the record for appearances of any Preston North End player, both before or since. Kelly also won forty seven caps for the Republic of Ireland during an eleven year stint in their goal. He had actually made his international debut against England in a World Cup qualifying match at Wembley in 1957, whilst playing for Drumcondra.

After his playing days ended, Kelly threw himself into the club's administration affairs, before taking over as coach and assistant to Nobby Stiles. In 1983, he took over as Preston North End manager for a short spell. He now lives in America.

Alan Kelly *Junior*

goalkeeper

Following in his father's footsteps, Alan Kelly Jnr made his first team debut for Preston North End on 8th March 1986. Just like his famous dad, though, his first league game ended in defeat, as Crewe Alexander beat Preston North End 2-1 at Deepdale.

But, like his dad, he was to go on to capture the hearts of all Preston North End fans during the next few seasons, with a consistent number of displays which proved his talent and worth to the side. Mind you, he had to fight for his place on numerous occasions throughout his Deepdale career, as both David Brown and Simon Farnworth fought tooth and nail for that coveted goalie's jersey. Nevertheless, Kelly still managed to clock up 142 league appearances during his Preston North End career.

Kelly Jnr won numerous international honours whilst with Preston North End, including caps at youth, U21, U23, and B level. He didn't manage to win a full international cap until he had already left Deepdale for Bramall Lane, where he gave sterling service to Sheffield United for a number of years. He moved to Blackburn Rovers at the start of the 1999/2000 season.

Kelly (middle back row), pictured with his 1989/90 team-mates.

But, like his dad, he was to go on to capture the hearts of all Preston North End fans during the next few seasons, with a consistent number of displays which proved his talent and worth to the side.

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The Best Ever?

The Lancashire Evening Post's recent poll to find the 'best ever' fantasy North End line up since the Second World War, produced a fantastic line-up. If you compare the fantasy team with the 1954 team and look at the FA Cup final line-up, it is arguably the best post-war eleven to grace the pitch. No fewer than five of the fan's fantasy team played in that single line-up - Finney of course, Marston, Docherty, Wayman and Cunningham. Most of the others are included in the book.

Younger fans may find it hard to believe that North End had a team packed with international stars. The only sad footnote to their place in history, as the best ever line-up, is the fact that on that day, in May 1954, they failed to live up to their reputation, losing 3-2 in the final, to a very workmanlike West Brom side.

In the final itself, North End went behind early, before Morrison equalised with a thunderous header. In the second half North End fans suddenly found themselves celebrating, as Charlie Wayman hit a great shot to put the Whites ahead. Alas, West Brom struck back, firstly through a Ronnie Allen penalty and then with the winner three minutes from time, through Griffin. The defeat at Wembley can not detract from the quality of this side, who had progressed to Wembley be beating Derby County, thrashing Ipswich Town 6-1, Leicester City after a replay and then beating a very good Sheffield Wednesday side in the semi-final at Maine Road.

As Sir Tom Finney himself recalled in his book, Sir Tom, a Pictorial Tribute:

"We had an international goalkeeper in George Thompson, the Scottish grafter in Tommy Docherty, the best centre half in Britain at that time in Joe Marston, a winger on the fringe of international recognition in Angus Morrison and a striker who scored goals for fun in Charlie Wayman. That is not to mention several quality performers who helped make up a good all-round team."

Mattinson was the twelfth man in the squad, but these were the days before substitutes were allowed and he was to miss out at Wembley.

These twelve are arguably North End's best post war line-up. From left to right: Finney, Wayman, Baxter, Cunningham, Walton, Docherty, Foster, Forbes, Marston, Morrison, Mattinson and Thompson.

4 Howard Kendall

right half

In 1964, Howard Kendall made history by becoming the youngest ever player to appear in an FA Cup final, at the tender age of seventeen. Though Preston North End lost that game to West Ham United, Kendall was rightly praised for his contribution to the Preston cause over the ninety minutes.

He began his Deepdale career after starring for England Schoolboys in a 7-3 win over Wales at the Vetch Field, becoming an apprentice professional soon after that impressive win over the Welsh. He made his league debut at the age of sixteen, playing in North End's 2-2 draw with Newcastle United. He scored his first ever league goal at The Dell later that season, as Preston North End beat Southampton by five goals to four in one of the games of the decade.

Kendall received a tremendous welcome when returning to Deepdale, in Autumn 1999.

He made his league debut at the age of sixteen, playing in North End's 2-2 draw with Newcastle United.

The season after the cup final against West Ham United, Kendall was selected by England manager, Alf Ramsey for an FA representative team, who were playing a two match tour in Gibraltar. England won both games, with Kendall scoring in each one. After the excitement of international stardom, it was back to domestic affairs, and Kendall continued in a rich vein of form. This merely had the effect of alerting a number of top clubs, including Everton, who sought to tempt him with a fabulous offer which they hoped would bring the young starlet to Goodison Park. Preston North End eventually sold him to Everton for £80,000 in March 1967, and it was on Merseyside that Kendall found his true vocation, as he teamed up with Alan Ball and Colin Harvey in the Everton midfield. Those three players would later form the basis of a team which would climb to the pinnacle of domestic football, winning the League Championship under Harry Catterick in 1970. He then went on to be a very successful manager, particularly with Blackburn Rovers and his beloved Everton.

Ryan Kidd

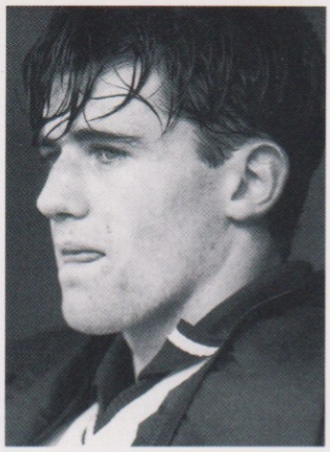
centre half

Radcliffe born, Ryan Kidd began his league career at Port Vale, before making his timely move to Preston North End in July 1992. An ultra-reliable defender, with the priceless asset of being adaptable, Kidd has served the club well ever since he first arrived at Deepdale.

His first season at the club was a frustrating time for the player, though, as he suffered from injury for much of that initial campaign. Since then, the defender has fulfilled a variety of defensive roles for Preston North End, including stints in almost every defensive position when injuries or suspensions have ruled other players out of contention.

Ryan Kidd's favoured position is left back, though his much vaunted adaptability deems him worthy of inclusion in any defensive or full back position, as he has shown on countless occasions in the past for Preston North End. A very consistent player, Ryan possesses tremendous heading and tackling abilities, and has the vision to help initiate attacks straight from defence. He is also a very modest player who shuns any limelight, preferring to quietly get on with his game.

A very consistent player, Ryan possesses tremendous heading and tackling abilities, and has the vision to help initiate attacks straight from defence.



Kevin Kilbane

left winger

Kevin became a firm favourite at Deepdale before becoming North End's first £1 million sale and West Bromich Albion's first £1 million buy. The Irish youngster was Preston born and bred and progressed through the youth ranks at the club.

After starring in the Youth team he signed full terms in July 1995 and by this stage he was already well known for his pace and crossing abilities down the left-hand side. In his first season he troubled many defences, making 53 league and cup appearances, scoring three goals. In the close season before the start of the 1997/98 campaign Kevin moved to the Hawthorns in a package worth £1 million, which also saw Julian Darby move the other way.

The 22-year-old winger is now a full International with the Republic of Ireland and has impressed many people with his performances at both Club and International level. He has recently been linked with a move to a number of the top Premiership Clubs, and there is no doubt that he has a huge career ahead of him at the top level, but he will always have a special place in the heart of the fans at Deepdale.

In his first season he troubled many defences, making 53 league and cup appearances, scoring three goals.

Ken Knighton

midfield/left half

Some players earn inclusion in the pantheon of great footballers with sublime displays of skill, or by great deeds in famous soccer matches. But, for some footballers, lacking as they may be in heaven-sent talents, idolatry affection arrives through sheer graft and dedication to duty. Ken Knighton was just such a player.

His early career as a youngster saw him playing his trade with Texborough, a local amateur side, situated near Barnsley. Knighton desperately wanted to earn a living as a professional footballer, and when mighty Wolverhampton Wanderers asked him to sign apprentice forms with the club, he jubilantly signed on the dotted line.

Originally an inside left, he quickly made the transition to wing half whilst with the Midlands club. He made sixteen appearances for Wolves, before moving to Oldham Athletic in November 1966. His form, good as it was, actually improved at Boundary Park, to the extent where numerous scouts from league clubs made regular journeys to watch him play. Preston North End's scouts were amongst them, and quickly reported back their findings to the manager.

A year after joining Oldham Athletic, the Preston North End board sanctioned a move for Knighton, with the result that he joined the club's playing staff. Knighton's endeavour and will to win soon became evident at his new club, much to the delight of everybody at Deepdale, especially the fans, who welcomed the player with open arms. He played in sixty two league games for Preston North End, and managed to get his name on the scoresheet on three occasions. But, in June 1969, Knighton, having played a major part in the club's fortunes since first joining the club, moved to Ewood Park to join Blackburn Rovers.

In later years, Ken Knighton played his football in his native Yorkshire, initially with Hull City, and later with Sheffield Wednesday. In total, he played in 349 league games during his six club career.

Knighton's endeavour and will to win soon became evident at his new club, much to the delight of everybody at Deepdale, especially the fans, who welcomed the player with open arms.

11 Bobby Langton

outside left

Bobby Langton was another player whose football career was sadly put on hold because of the ravages of war. He had originally commenced his career with Burscough Victoria, a Southport league side, before being signed by Blackburn Rovers for £50 in 1937.

The Ewood Park outfit soon realised they had a real talent on their hands, and quickly installed Langton in the outside left position. It was from this part of the pitch that the forward got his name on the scoresheet on fourteen occasions in thirty seven appearances for the club, during their promotion winning season of 1938/39.

When the Second World War began, Langton joined the army as an Infantryman, serving in India. But, he still managed to get some much needed football practice in, especially after his commanding officers realised they had a rare footballing talent in their midst. Once they found out, Langton's services on the pitch were required almost as much as they were on the battle field, as he found himself being selected for almost every Army representative XI during his stint in India.

After hostilities had ended in 1945, he won a full England international cap, when turning out for his country against Northern Ireland. On the domestic front, Blackburn Rovers were struggling on the pitch, and in turn, struggling to keep hold of Langton, who was quite a hot property at this stage of his career. In August 1949, Preston North End made their move, and captured him for themselves. The club paid £16,000 for his services, and must have thought the fee a real steal, especially during one of Langton's early games for his new club. Manchester City provided the opposition to Preston North End, and straight from the kick-off, the ball was played to Langton, who proceeded to drill the ball home past a hapless City goalkeeper. It had taken a mere seven seconds from kick-off for the ball to land in the opposition net!

Unfortunately, Bobby Langton's Deepdale career, which had promised so much, never really took off, to the point where he was transferred to Bolton Wanderers after playing in just fifty five league games for Preston North End. During his brief sojourn in west Lancashire, the forward had scored fourteen goals, a good ratio considering he wasn't primarily a full-blooded attacker. At Burnden Park, though, his career blossomed as he settled into life in his favoured outside left position. He stayed with Bolton Wanderers until 1953, when he decided to rejoin his former club, Blackburn Rovers.

The club paid £16,000 for his services, and must have thought the fee a real steal.

Mark Lawrenson

centre back

Preston born, Mark Lawrenson was to achieve fame and fortune in the game as a classy and highly skilled centre back, primarily with Liverpool. His father, Tom, had played for Preston North End in 1954, albeit, just the one game, before leaving for Southport FC.

His son, Mark, made his North End debut in 1974, and eventually made seventy three first team appearances in the white shirt, before leaving to join Brighton & Hove Albion in July 1977. He eventually made 152 appearances for the South coast club, before making his big money move to Liverpool.

One of the finest tacklers in the game, Lawrenson was a cultured and skilled defender who represented the Republic of Ireland on thirty eight occasions. He won four League Championship medals, a European Cup medal in 1984, an FA Cup winners medal and three League Cup medals during his time with the Anfield club.

Injury sadly curtailed the career of one of the finest defenders this country has ever seen. Lawrenson later went on to manage both Oxford United and Peterborough United, before retiring from management to concentrate on his broadcasting and media work.

One of the finest tacklers in the game, Lawrenson was a cultured and skilled defender who represented the Republic of Ireland on thirty eight occasions.

Nobby Lawton

right half

An inspirational captain! A born leader! These were just some of the accolades afforded to Preston North End captain, Nobby Lawton, during his time at the club. Nobby arrived at Deepdale from Manchester United in November 1963, a time when North End were struggling at the foot of the old Second Division.

Jimmy Milne brought him to Deepdale on the eve of transfer deadline day for £11,500, and what a bargain he proved to be.

He had played a mere thirty six league games for United, but what he might have lacked in experience, he certainly made up for in enthusiasm, skill and power. A little over five months after joining the club, he had helped Preston North End to reach the FA Cup final. Nobby was equally happy playing in midfield or attack, but it was his leadership qualities which endeared him to the Deepdale faithful more than anything else. Though we were to lose that cup final to West Ham United, it was Lawton's role in the game which captured many people's attention. He never stopped running, cajoling and urging his team-mates on, though to no avail of course, as the Hammers went on to win the game.

Lawton made 164 league and cup appearances for Preston North End, scoring twenty three goals over a five year period. He eventually left to join Brighton & Hove Albion.

A little over five months after joining the club, he had helped Preston North End to reach the FA Cup final.

Frank Lee

left wing

Frank Lee arrived at Deepdale after serving his amateur apprenticeship with St Josephs, in Anderton, before starring with Horwich schoolboy team. He initially signed amateur forms with Preston North End, before putting ink to paper on a semi-professional contract with the club.

Frank Lee was incredibly skilfull with the ball at his feet, as many opposition defenders found to their cost over a long playing career. Primarily a left winger, he possessed amazing speed and the innate ability to bamboozle the opposition with his intricate and tricky footwork.

Lee made his debut for Preston North End during the 1963/64 season, even though he was still bound by the semi-professional contract he had signed a couple of years earlier. He eventually signed a full, professional contract in April 1965, and during his first full season as a proper professional footballer, played twenty eight times. He eventually made 153 league appearances for Preston North End, before leaving for Haig Avenue, the home of Southport FC.

During his three year stint on the North West coast, he made 115 appearances for the Sandgrounders, scoring twenty goals in the process, before finishing his playing career at Stockport County.

Primarily a left winger, he possessed amazing speed and the innate ability to bamboozle the opposition with his intricate and tricky footwork.

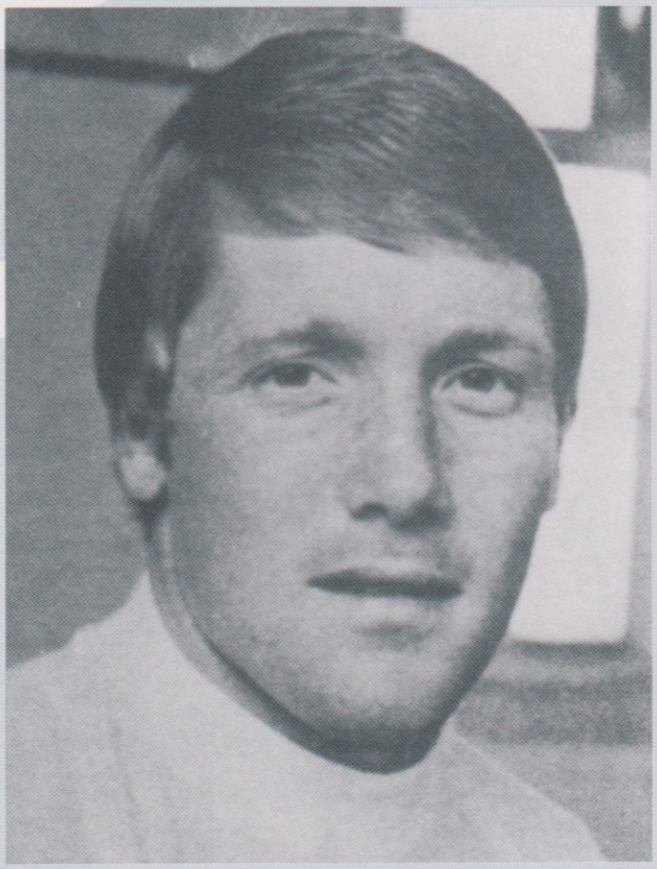
George Lyall

inside forward

George was signed from Raith Rovers, the club which produced both Alex James and David Morris during the 1920s. But, Preston North End had to fight tooth and nail to secure their man, in the face of stiff competition from a host of other top flight English clubs.

8

They were tempted by the fact that Lyall had shown a keen eye for goal during his Scotland days, scoring 32 goals in his first season for Raith Rovers. He was a player who packed a powerful shot, and the ability to be in the right place inside the penalty area, whenever a chance was created.



Surprisingly though, George found it difficult to settle down at Deepdale initially. He was put into the reserve side, where he showed effervescent form throughout his Central League days. Trouble was, he was finding it difficult to transfer that form whenever he got a chance in the Preston North End first team. This contrast in form was highlighted by the sobering fact that during his first three seasons at Deepdale, he only played in 23 first team games.

Eventually, he discovered his form, and went on to play in 105 league games, scoring 16 goals, before he joined Nottingham Forest in May 1972. During his stay at the City Ground, he figured in 116 league games, scoring 24 goals on the way. He eventually moved to Hull City, where he ended his playing career.

Preston North End had to fight tooth and nail to secure their man, in the face of stiff competition from a host of other top flight English clubs.

5

Joe Marston

centre half

Australian born, Joe Marston, was the third and final piece in North End's half back triumvirate, which included tough tackling compadres, Tommy Docherty and Willie Forbes. Joe arrived at Deepdale on the recommendation of a man called Percy Sewell, who had emigrated to Australia a number of years earlier.

A keen football fan, Percy had spotted Joe playing for Leichhardt FC, in Sydney, in the burgeoning Aussie league. Having spoken at length to the player regarding a possible move to the English league, Percy eventually contacted Blackpool manager, Joe Smith, recommending Marston come over for a trial. Unfortunately for the Seasiders, Smith ignored his advice and so Marston arrived at Deepdale, quickly impressing the coaching staff and the rest of the first team players with his enthusiasm and defensive skills.

He was soon pitched into first team duties in the right back position, though failed to impress initially, with pundits and some fans convinced that he couldn't adapt to the English game. How wrong they were, because after switching to the centre of defence, Marston became one of Preston North End's most influential defensive lynch-pins in their post-war history. His chance of first team glory arrived, ironically, after regular defender, Harry Mattinson had broken his leg in a Fourth Round FA Cup tie in the 1950/51 season. Joe took up the cudgels and never looked back, making his mark in spectacular and uncompromising fashion. Apart from Preston North End, his name will forever also be linked with both Tommy Docherty and Willie Forbes, especially amongst the older generation of fans, as he went on to forge a tremendous partnership with those two talented individuals in the Preston side of the early 1950's. Joe eventually made almost 200 first team appearances for the club, and was an ever present in the side during three successive seasons between 1951 and 1954. After leaving Preston North End in 1954, he returned to live in Australia, where he resettled with his wife and family.

Marston became one of Preston North End's most influential defensive lynch-pins in their post-war history.

Training at Deepdale. From left to right: K. Mitton, J. Marston and W. Forbes.

Harry Mattinson

centre half

Dual purpose player, would be the best way to describe Harry Mattinson. Arriving from Middlesbrough in March 1949, the centre half soon filled a variety of roles in Preston North End's back four line. At various times during his Deepdale career, he was asked to fill in for Willie Cunningham at right back, the right half position for Tommy Docherty, and left half for Willie Forbes.

This adaptability was a sure-fire sign of dependability and no little talent, qualities which stood the team in good stead during Mattinson's time at the club. The defender was even asked to fill in at centre forward for one particular game, an FA Cup tie against Sunderland at Roker Park, but surprisingly, Mattinson asked not to be considered for the position for fear of letting everybody down.

Having shone in almost every defensive role he had been asked to fill, Mattinson reverted to his normal centre half position for an FA Cup tie against Huddersfield Town at Deepdale in the 1950's. But, the fickle finger of fate lent this most adaptable of players a bad hand that afternoon, when he received a broken shin which damaged not just his body but his first team career at Preston North End. Aussie born, Joe Marston stepped into his boots whilst Mattinson was nursing his broken leg, and kept them for himself. Because of the good form shown by Marston, the injured Mattinson was forced to spend two whole seasons languishing in Preston North End's reserve team, much to his frustration and disappointment. His absence from the team also meant he missed out on the club's promotion to the First Division that same season. Marston went on to make 191 consecutive first team appearances, whilst Mattinson eventually sought pastures new with Scottish club, Queen of the South, whom he moved to in June 1960. During his twelve season stay at Deepdale, Mattinson played in 131 league and cup games.

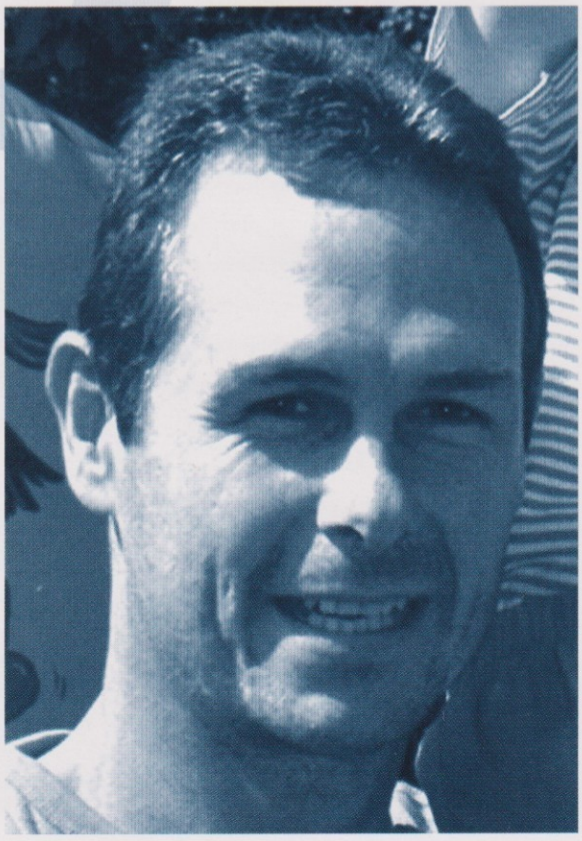
The fickle finger of fate lent this most adaptable of players a bad hand that afternoon, when he received a broken shin which damaged not just his body but his first team career at Preston North End.

Andy McAteer

left back

Preston born, Andy McAteer was signed by his home-town club when he was still a schoolboy, joining the club straight from school as an apprentice professional. He quietly but effectively came through the ranks, playing in the club's youth and reserve teams, before getting his chance of glory at left back for Preston North End's Boxing Day morning game against Shrewsbury Town in 1979.

The decision to play Andy at left back was because of a short series of events which most definitely worked in his favour. Playing in a Central League game in his usual midfield position, Andy was asked to fill in for Steve Uzelac, after he had been sent off. Harry Wilson moved into the centre of the pitch, whilst Andy McAteer moved to Uzelac's defensive position. Preston North End defeated their Christmas rivals 3-0, with Andy playing a blinder in the left back slot.



He became a permanent fixture in the side after that game, and hardly missed a game for the next seven seasons. In total, he played in 238 league games for Preston North End, before joining Blackpool. He didn't settle to life on the coast, though, and rejoined North End in May 1988, figuring in another thirteen games, before retiring from the professional ranks.

In total, he played in 238 league games for Preston North End, before joining Blackpool.

Neil McDonald

midfield

The former Everton full back arrived at Preston North End for £40,000 in November 1995, from Bolton Wanderers. A classy defender who could also be called upon to play in midfield, McDonald oozed class whenever he was in possession of the ball.

In April 1997, Neil took on a coaching position with Preston North End, though still retained his player registration.

He began his league career with Newcastle United in the 1980's, making his debut at the tender age of sixteen, in a side which also included footballing legend, Kevin Keegan. He then made a £525,000 move to Goodison Park in August 1988, where he enjoyed success as a scheming midfielder. In October 1991, Oldham Athletic manager, Joe Royle paid £500,000 for his services, but things didn't work out at Boundary Park for Neil, and he later moved to Bolton Wanderers, where Bruce Rioch was the manager.

He made his debut for Preston North End in an Auto Windscreen Shield match against Scarborough United in November 1995, and almost managed to get his name on the scoresheet in that initial game, only for the crossbar to come to Scarborough's rescue. An excellent passer of the ball, he also possessed great vision, and these footballing qualities were fully utilised as he helped the club to win promotion, as they finished the 1995/96 season as Third Division champions.

In April 1997, Neil took on a coaching position with Preston North End, though still retained his player registration. In the summer of 1999, he became the club's youth team manager, and is currently nurturing Preston North End's future stars in a new and exciting development to his career.

Willie McIntosh

centre forward

After the Second World War had ended, and just weeks before Preston North End embarked on their inaugural post-war season, Willie McIntosh joined the club from Scottish side, St. Johnstone for £6,000. That first league game, against Leeds United at Deepdale, was a momentous occasion, not least because the home side were fielding seven new players, including McIntosh.

Bought to lead the Preston North End forward line, the Scottish born player certainly led by example, with a series of breathtaking and brave displays for the Lilywhites. A prolific goalscorer, McIntosh was the scourge of many opposition defences. This quality was epitomised in his first few games for Preston North End, when a brace of hat-tricks in three games highlighted his acute finishing power. The fans, as you would expect, quickly took him to their hearts.

McIntosh, seated to the right of Finney (front row), with his 1948/49 team-mates.

During his first season at the club, McIntosh played in forty four league and cup games, scoring thirty goals along the way. Unfortunately, this tremendous goalscoring feat became too much to live up to, because the following season saw the goals dry up at an alarming rate. Eventually, he was allowed to leave Deepdale for Bloomfield Road, where he stayed for three seasons, before departing Blackpool to play for Stoke City. He finished his playing career at Walsall.

During his first season at the club, McIntosh played in forty four league and cup games, scoring thirty goals along the way.

Andy McLaren

inside right

The outbreak of war in 1939 scuppered any chance of glory which Scottish prodigy, Andy McLaren might have wished for during those dark days of World War II. A player with immense potential, McLaren had actually played for Scotland against England at Wembley a full five years before making his league debut in 1946, at the age of twenty four.

McLaren was a typical Scottish ball juggler, who was able to use his intricate skills to bamboozle defenders all ends up. He also possessed a powerful shot, which he wasn't afraid to use whenever the goal was in his sights. He played alongside Tom Finney in Preston North End's junior sides, before both made the transition to the first team just after the war.

McLaren made just 69 league appearances for the club in thirty months, scoring 39 goals, before being surprisingly transferred to Burnley. The Clarets certainly knew they had a bargain, as McLaren continued to harangue defenders and score goals after leaving Deepdale. To add salt to an already stinging wound, Preston North End were relegated at the end of that season, whilst their former goal-getter went from strength to strength with Burnley.

He played alongside Tom Finney in Preston North End's junior sides, before both made the transition to the first team just after the war.

John McMahon

right back

Even though he was already registered as a Preston North End player, John McMahon actually made his full league debut for Southend United, after being sent on loan to Roots Hall to gain experience. He made his Preston North End debut in a League Cup tie against West Bromwich Albion during the 1970/71 season.

His full league debut arrived a fortnight later, against Halifax Town at The Shay. Those early experiences obviously stood John in good stead, as he quickly established himself in Preston North End's first team, to the point where he was voted Player of the Year at the end of the following season. More representative awards followed, as he was chosen by his fellow professionals in the end of season divisional team in 1976/77.

A tough tackling full back, McMahon stayed at Deepdale for twelve years, and was awarded a testimonial against Blackpool in May 1977, in recognition of his services to the club. He also captained the side and played in 291 league and cup games for Preston North End, before leaving to join Crewe Alexander. He later played for Wigan Athletic, Tranmere Rovers, Curzon Athletic and Irlam Town.

He also captained the side and played in 291 league and cup games for Preston North End, before leaving to join Crewe Alexander.

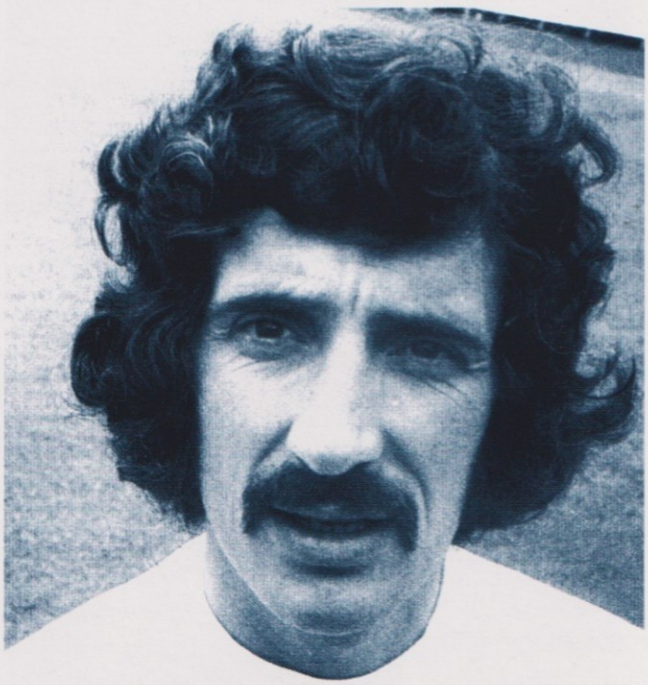
Jim McNab

left half

Jim McNab was originally spotted playing for his local Scottish junior team by Sunderland. The Wearsiders, recognising the potential of the talented wing half, quickly swooped to secure his signature when he was fifteen years of age.

He made his first team debut for Sunderland in 1958/59, and eventually made 285 appearances, scoring 13 goals along the way.

He signed for Preston North End in March 1967, and spent the following seven seasons at Deepdale. A tenacious tackler, who also possessed excellent distribution skills, McNab became an integral member of the first team squad. He eventually made 224 league appearances for the club, scoring six goals, before departing for Edgeley Park in 1974. It was whilst he was a Stockport County player that he made the last of his 539 league appearances.



A tenacious tackler, who also possessed excellent distribution skills, McNab became an integral member of the first team squad.

Gordon Milne

right half

The inclusion of Gordon Milne in this book, highlights the depth of quality which Preston North End had at their disposal during the late 1950's and early 1960's. A highly skilled midfield player, Gordon, whose father had served the club in different capacities so well over many years, including incidentally, as player, trainer and manager in three separate cup finals, soon made his mark for Preston North End, commencing first team duties as replacement for both Tommy Docherty and Frank O'Farrell, when injury curtailed that duo's appearances for a spell.

He made ten first team appearances during that initial first team stint, but eventually got his chance to stake a permanent claim for a place when Docherty signed for Arsenal in August 1958. He went on to make twenty nine consecutive league appearances in the right half position, and also starred in three FA Cup ties that same season.

A highly skilled midfield player, Gordon, whose father had served the club in different capacities so well over many years, including incidentally, as player, trainer and manager in three separate cup finals, soon made his mark for Preston North End.

Not bad for a lad who was still doing his national service at the time! His subsequent form for Preston North End prompted the English selectors to include him in a British Army XI, who were due to play against the French army in Paris. He impressed greatly in that game and even more so when arriving back in Preston, because the following season he made thirty eight first team appearances, including ten as a makeshift inside right.

Unfortunately, the opening three games of Preston North End's relegation season - 1960/61 - signalled the end of Gordon's Deepdale career, as the club's three defeats were unjustifiably blamed on Milne and a couple of other players. He was dropped from the team, though it didn't take long for him to recover, particularly when former Preston

North End great, Bill Shankly offered to take him to Anfield. A mere three days after being dropped, Milne signed for Liverpool for £17,000. He starred in the Red's successful promotion campaign the following season, playing in all forty two league games. He eventually made 279 league and cup appearances for Liverpool, before moving to Bloomfield Road for a spell.

Soon afterwards, Milne began his long managerial career, commencing at Wigan Athletic, whom he led to the Northern Premier League title in 1970/71. He then left Springfield Park to manage First Division, Coventry City, before joining Leicester City, where he enjoyed real fame by guiding the East Midlands club to promotion to the First Division in 1983. He then left for pastures new in Turkey, and has since made a prominent name for himself in managerial circles in that part of the world, particularly at Besiktas.

His subsequent form for Preston North End prompted the English selectors to include him in a British Army XI, who were due to play against the French army in Paris.

North End's equaliser in the 1954 FA Cup final was a powerful header from number eleven, Angus Morrison.

Angus Morrison

centre forward

Angus Morrison was already well known to everybody connected with Preston North End Football Club, having been Derby County's main threat in that classic Deepdale clash of 1947, when the Lilywhites came back from 4-3 down to win 7-4.

Morrison had scored a hat-trick in that game, and when the opportunity of signing this prolific striker arrived, Preston North End didn't shirk the issue. He arrived in November 1948, and quickly established an excellent rapport with both Quigley and Beattie upfront.

Morrison shakes the hand of The Queen Mother, before the 1954 FA Cup final.

Playing at outside left, Morrison shared in a promotion success to the First Division and the 1954 Wembley run. He was a player who became a firm favourite with the Deepdale crowd, primarily because of his willingness to shoot on sight, a policy not lost on plenty of opposition goalkeepers during his stay at the club. He scored 70 times for Preston North End, having played 262 league games. He left to join Millwall in October 1950.

He arrived in November 1948, and quickly established an excellent rapport with both Quigley and Beattie upfront.

5

David Moyes

centre half

This book's main purpose is to highlight famous names and characters who have contributed greatly to the Preston North End cause on the pitch since the post-war period. To this end, the name David Moyes merits a worthy inclusion into proceedings.

A never-say-die player, with guts to match his undoubted all-round defensive abilities, Moyes first arrived at Deepdale during the summer of 1993 as a player. He brought with him a vast wealth of experience, accumulated during a long playing career with Celtic, Dunfermline, Cambridge United, Bristol City, Shrewsbury Town, Dunfermline Athletic and Hamilton Academicals. In total, he has played in over 450 games for his various clubs.

A strong tackler and header of the ball, Moyes led by example during his playing career, and as you would expect, continued in the same vein at Deepdale. He was appointed player/coach in summer 1995, effectively becoming Gary Peter's assistant manager. As a player, Moyes had always harboured ambitions in this direction, and always made a point of listening and learning from managers he worked under throughout his playing career, with a view to managing a Football League club himself one day.

This objective he achieved in January 1998, when he replaced Gary Peters as manager of Preston North End. Since then, he has helped the club avert the danger of relegation during his first few months in charge, before almost leading the Lilywhites to promotion in 1998/99. He was voted Nationwide Division Two Manager of the Month in October 1999.

A never-say-die player, with guts to match his undoubted all-round defensive abilities, Moyes first arrived at Deepdale during the summer of 1995 as a player/coach.

Kurt Nogan

forward

Signed by former manager, Gary Peters on March 13th 1997, for £150,000, Kurt Nogan quickly showed the Deepdale faithful just how prolific he could be in front of goal. Arriving from Lancashire neighbours, Burnley, the Welsh born striker began his Deepdale career with a flourish and has continued to do so during his stay at the club.

During his final season at Turf Moor, 1995/96, Nogan managed to get his name on the scoresheet on twenty seven occasions - a tremendous goalscoring statistic which helped cement Preston North End's decision to bring him to Deepdale. He began his league career at Luton Town, and one of the highlights of his time at Kenilworth Road was scoring the winning goal in a league game against Liverpool in front of the famous Spion Kop.

Since then, Nogan has continued to score goals almost for fun. Not many people will forget his brace of goals against Arsenal in a televised 3rd Round FA Cup tie at Deepdale in January 1999, a game which elevated Nogan and the rest of the Preston North End team into the consciousness of a whole nation after ninety scintillating minutes of non-stop action.

During his final season at Turf Moor, 1995/96, Nogan managed to get his name on the scoresheet on twenty seven occasions - a tremendous goalscoring statistic which helped cement Preston North End's decision to bring him to Deepdale.

6 Frank O'Farrell

left half

Before making his name as a manager, in particular, as boss of Manchester United in the early 1970's, Frank O'Farrell had already made his mark as a player with a number of clubs. One of those clubs was, of course, Preston North End. He was Cliff Britton's first ever signing as manager in November 1956, and was bought as a ready replacement for the departing Willie Forbes in the left half position.

O'Farrell had arrived from West Ham United in a straight exchange deal involving centre forward, Eddie Lewis, who hadn't been having the best of luck in front of goal for North End in recent months.

O'Farrell arrived with plenty of experience under his belt, having played in 210 league and cup games for the Hammers over previous seasons. And, he certainly put that experience to good use in his opening game for North End, scoring in the victory over Manchester City at Deepdale. It took until the sixteenth game for Preston North End to lose whilst O'Farrell was playing, a cup replay against Arsenal at Highbury. In the league, this remarkable phenomenon continued with Preston North End not losing a game when he was in the side until the penultimate fixture.

The following season saw Preston North End record one of their biggest ever points total, with fifty nine points accrued, as they finished runners-up in the First Division. During a relatively short period at the club, O'Farrell made 129 league and cup appearances. He later moved onto non-league Weymouth as player/manager in May 1961, taking the south coast club to the Southern League Championship, before taking up the vacant manager's post at Torquay United, where he emulated his previous success by winning promotion in his first season. O'Farrell was then offered the manager's job at Leicester City; a position he came to relish, particularly after taking his team to the FA Cup final and gaining promotion to the First Division. He eventually arrived at Old Trafford to succeed the legendary Matt Busby, though wasn't able to turn the Manchester club's fortunes around.

It took until the sixteenth game for Preston North End to lose whilst O'Farrell was playing, a cup replay against Arsenal at Highbury.

Don O'Riordan

centre half

The signing of Don O'Riordan was quite a unique experience for Preston North End, because the club secured his signature from an American club, Tulsa Roughnecks. O'Riordan was actually Irish, and was originally spotted by a scout from Derby County, whilst playing in Dublin. He spent the next six years at the Baseball Ground, but made limited progress, making six first team appearances, four as substitute.

Ex-Manchester United European Cup hero, Bill Foulkes, who was managing Tulsa Roughnecks at the time, asked him to travel to America with a view to signing the player. This he did, and O'Riordan settled down to make a new life in that country.

His name eventually cropped up in conversation amongst the Preston North End directors, and after much bargaining, they finally secured their man. Curiously, there was a proviso in the contract between both clubs, which allowed O'Riordan to play for Preston North End during the winter, and Tulsa Roughnecks in the summer. He was a versatile player, I suppose he had to be to endure all-year round soccer! Nevertheless, he played in 158 league games for North End, before leaving for Brunton Park in August 1983. Later in his career, he played for Middlesbrough, Grimsby Town, Notts County and Mansfield Town, before finally hanging up his much travelled boots.

5

He played in 158 league games for North End, before leaving for Brunton Park in August 1983.

Gary Parkinson

right back

Gary Parkinson arrived from Burnley in May 1997 for £50,000, and this experienced defender quickly brought added solidity and flair to Preston North End's defensive back four. An added attraction to the North Easterner's game is his dead-ball capabilities, which came to the fore during the 1997/98 season, when a number of power-packed free kicks ended up in the back of the opposition's net.

Parkinson originally began his league career at Middlesbrough, having spent time on trial with Manchester City, Chelsea and Everton. During his Ayresome Park days, Parky, as he's known to everybody at Deepdale, played in a tremendously talented team, which included Gary Pallister, Bernie Slaven, Tony Mowbray, Colin Cooper, Stuart Ripley and Stephen Pears, who all went on to make big names for themselves in the game.

A severe knee injury, sustained during the 1998/99 season, curtailed Parkinson's Deepdale career for a spell, but at the time of writing, the full back is steadily working his way back to full fitness, with a view to making his return to the Preston North End first team before the millennium.

An added attraction to the North Easterner's game is his dead-ball capabilities, which came to the fore during the 1997/98 season, when a number of power-packed free kicks ended up in the back of the opposition's net.

Eddie Quigley

centre forward

9

Preston North End broke the bank when they purchased the services of Eddie Quigley in December 1949. His signing for £26,500 from Sheffield Wednesday was a British transfer record at the time.

It must have been an exciting couple of days at Deepdale, because the previous day the club had shelled out £18,000 for the services of Willie Forbes from Wolverhampton Wanderers. On reflection, it must be stated that the club's board of directors were taking a chance, certainly with Quigley, because up to that point, the player had never experienced top level football, having played all his soccer in the lower leagues.

Quigley found himself playing outside the First Division and this game, in April 1950, was the first local derby between North End and Rovers in Division Two.

But, he possessed an explosive shot, an ultra keen eye for goal, and excellent ball playing skills. He could also split any defence with his acute passing awareness. Unfortunately, his style of play didn't relate to Preston North End's style, and after just 52 league games, and midway through the 1951/52 season, he was transferred to Blackburn Rovers for £23,500.

He possessed an explosive shot, an ultra keen eye for goal, and excellent ball playing skills.

Mark Rankine

midfield

If one single word could sum up Preston North End's midfield dynamo, that word would be commitment... with a capital C. Rankine arrived at Deepdale from Wolverhampton Wanderers in September 1996 for £80,000, and quickly forged a reputation for himself as a no-nonsense midfield player who possessed tenacity, grit and determination in abundance.

He had made over 200 appearances for the Molineux club, before his move to Deepdale, and this invaluable experience helped bolster Preston North End's midfield department.

Never one to shirk a tackle, Rankine's major asset is his ability to harry and hassle opposition players to the point where possession is both retrieved and acted upon in an attacking and positive manner. During his early times as a Preston North End player, he fell foul of injuries, which curtailed his first team appearances somewhat. But, his determination to win his place back in the side was always a major factor in his rapid rehabilitation.

Mark Rankine has never been the type of player who scores goals on a regular basis, but nevertheless, his willingness to support his defensive colleagues and initiate attacks marks him down as a player whom Preston North End fans can rely on to give his all in every game he plays for the club. The player signed a new and improved contract during the summer of 1999, which will keep him at Deepdale well into the new millennium.

Never one to shirk a tackle, Rankine's major asset is his ability to harry and hassle opposition players to the point where possession is both retrieved and acted upon in an attacking and positive manner.

Mick Rathbone

full back

Preston North End's physiotherapist, Mick 'Baz' Rathbone began his playing career with his boyhood idols, Birmingham City. A steady if unspectacular full back, Rathbone epitomised the qualities needed to succeed in the game; namely, talent, determination, and a willingness to learn.

He played twenty first team games for his home town club, before leaving to join Blackburn Rovers for £40,000. He spent eight seasons at Ewood Park, appearing in over 300 games for the East Lancashire club. He then made the short trip down the M65 to Preston, where he played for the following four seasons, the last two unfortunately, being plagued by injuries which severely disrupted his progress at the club.

Mick then decided on a major career change, electing to leave football for a spell by going to University to study Chartered Physiotherapy. A few years later, he emerged clutching an honours degree in this interesting subject. Determined to get a job in football, he decided to use his new found skills as a physiotherapist in a football environment. And when in 1995, former Preston North End manager, Gary Peters asked him back to Deepdale to serve the club in this capacity, he jumped at the opportunity.

Since that timely appointment, Mick has become one of the most popular characters at Deepdale, and his undoubted skills in the field of physiotherapy has served both him and the team well during the past few seasons. He also prides himself in keeping as fit as possible, and is regularly seen pounding the paths and pavements of Moor Park in Preston when his presence is not required in the physiotherapy room at Deepdale.

He spent eight seasons at Ewood Park, appearing in over 300 games for the East Lancashire club.

John Ritchie

left back

For Ashington born, John Ritchie, the opportunity of moving south to further his football career was just the spur he needed, after starring in local amateur football for the previous few years. Such was his form in that sphere of football that he was called upon to represent the England Amateur team on a number of occasions.

A strong tackling full back, Ritchie had already made quite a name for himself by turning out for both Blyth Spartans and Whitley Bay in the north east. When professional clubs came a-knocking on his door with a view to signing him, he had no hesitation in making the bold transition. He joined Port Vale in December 1965, and soon settled into the hurly burly of full time football.

After making fifty league appearances for the Vale Park outfit, he was transferred to Preston North End. A fierce tackler, Ritchie excelled at his new club, and soon became a crowd favourite, not least because of his do or die attitude when it came to dealing with attacking opposition. Quite apart from his defensive duties, he also liked to get forward in support of attack. This predilection for glory was rewarded with five goals during his stint at Deepdale. He made 93 league appearances for Preston North End, before eventually signing for Bradford City in March 1972.

A fierce tackler, Ritchie excelled at his new club, and soon became a crowd favourite, not least because of his do or die attitude when it came to dealing with attacking opposition.

Michael Robinson

centre forward

Born in Leicester, the teenage Michael Robinson arrived at Deepdale as an apprentice professional during the mid-1970's. He soon showed great promise in Preston North End's youth and reserve teams, and was quickly elevated to the first team scene.

His form upfront in the junior sides had already earned him a solid reputation, and this sense of impending repute was reinforced soon afterwards when he donned the first team jersey. He quickly established himself in the team, though every appearance he seemed to make attracted a posse of scouts from other clubs.

Michael Robinson now enjoys celebrity status in Spain, as one of the leading television football anchor-men.

Their interest quickly developed, to the point where Manchester City offered £750,000 for Robinson's services after he had played just forty five games for Preston North End. The club agreed to let him leave Deepdale in July 1979, though his time at Maine Road was limited, as he struggled to make an impact at that relatively early stage of his career.

A little over twelve months after initially joining Manchester City, Michael was transferred to Brighton & Hove Albion for less than half the amount he had cost the club in the first place. The forward seemed to find life on the south coast much more to his liking, because he soon hit a rich vein of form which ultimately led to Liverpool casting their net his way. The Anfield giants quickly got their man, as they shelled out £200,000 to cast the youngster alongside Kenny Dalglish in the Red's forward line. Michael Robinson had mixed fortunes during his stint at the club, but always tried his best whenever chosen to play. When Queens Park Rangers inquired about his services, Liverpool readily agreed to let him leave Anfield for Loftus Road. Again, it was mixed fortunes for Michael in London, to the point where he eventually took the plunge and left for pastures new in Spain. He joined top club, Osasuna, where he very quickly established a tremendous goalscoring reputation, much to the delight of the local fans.

On the international front, he managed to gain an impressive twenty three caps for the Republic of Ireland; his form helping to inspire the Republic's renaissance, which, a few years later, eventually led to appearances in the World Cup finals of 1990 and 1994.

Michael Robinson now enjoys celebrity status in Spain, as one of the leading television football anchor-men. His celebrated status much on a par with Des Lynam in this country.

George Ross

right back

George Ross arrived at Deepdale on 15th September 1958, as a confirmed wing half. He had played his early football for a team called Hilton Athletic, a Scottish junior side. Having been spotted by various scouts, he was invited to join the club's youth squad and starred in the successful side which reached the FA Youth Cup final against Chelsea.

Such was Ross's progress, that he made his full league debut less than two years later, on Boxing Day, 1960, against Nottingham Forest at Deepdale. A year later, he had become almost an ever present in the side, alongside Preston North End legend, Willie Cunningham. When the latter retired from playing, it was George who took up the right back mantle, such was his rapid progress since first joining the club.

He was an ever present during the whole of the 1963/64 season, appearing at Wembley in that season's FA Cup final against West Ham United. A tough tackling, no nonsense player, George also had the capabilities to turn defence into attack with a swift, incisive pass to a team-mate. During his Deepdale career, he won a Third Division Championship medal and various accolades both from friends and foes alike. He eventually left the club to join Southport on loan in November 1972, before returning to finish his Preston North End career.

He was granted a testimonial a year later, even though by now he had rejoined Southport on a permanent basis. Nevertheless, North End fans turned out in their droves to salute a player who had given his utmost to the Preston cause over many years. He had clocked up an astonishing 387 games for Preston North End during the course of his Deepdale career, and played another thirty one league games for Southport, before leaving for a season's stint in America with Washington Diplomats. After returning to this country, he played out his career at non-league, Morecambe and Telford United, before finally retiring from the game.

A year later, he had become almost an ever present in the side, alongside Preston North End legend, Willie Cunningham.

David Sadler

centre half

By the time the former Manchester United European Cup winning defender joined Preston North End in November 1973, he was in the twilight of an illustrious playing career. During his time at Old Trafford, he had also helped the club to a League Championship medal in the 1966/67 season.

As a youngster, he was originally spotted playing for the England Amateur international side, and after little deliberation, he decided to join Manchester United, much to the chagrin of a host of other clubs, who were all keen to sign this promising young defender.

His early days at the club were marked by the scoring of a hat-trick in the FA Youth Cup final in 1964, and this form, consistent and spectacular as it was, very soon elevated him to the first team ranks at Old Trafford. That's when his career really began to take off, as he quickly established a solid reputation in United's defensive ranks. The lifting of Europe's most prestigious trophy in 1968, when Manchester United defeated Portuguese Champions, Benfica, 4-1, in front of 100,000 fanatical fans at Wembley was the highlight of his Old Trafford career.

His former team-mate, Bobby Charlton brought him to Deepdale with a view to utilising his vast defensive experience in helping the Deepdale youngsters. Charlton's strategy worked, because Sadler very quickly forged strong links with the rest of the Preston North End back-four. His calm, skilled and assured play helped quell nerve which had beset the team as they fought a season long battle with relegation. Unfortunately, that particular battle was eventually lost as North End were relegated at the end of the season. Sadler certainly came out of that debacle with pride, though a succession of injuries didn't help matters, either for the club or the player himself. But, his vast experience helped youngsters like Mark Lawrenson and Mick Baxter find their feet in the hurly burly of league football.

His former team-mate, Bobby Charlton brought him to Deepdale with a view to utilising his vast defensive experience in helping the Deepdale youngsters.

Sadly, David Sadler was forced to retire from playing at the end of the 1976/77 season through injury. He still stayed in touch with the game he loved though, as he set about forging a new career as a football journalist and pundit, mainly working for the Manchester Evening News.

Andy Saville

centre forward

There have been plenty of characters who have donned the famous white shirt of Preston North End over the years, but Andy Saville remains one of the more memorable players to figure in the club's recent history.

Bald headed, with a sense of humour to boot, Andy arrived at Deepdale via a variety of clubs, including Hull City, his home town club, Walsall, Barnsley, Hartlepool United, Birmingham City and Burnley, where he spent time on loan from St. Andrews.

After joining North End, he managed to hit the target in the first pre-season fixture against Rochdale, and by the end of that opening ninety minutes, had secured his popularity with the Deepdale fans. A couple of weeks later, Preston opened their league account with a home game against Lincoln City. Though Saville got his name on the scoresheet, as he was to do many times that season, North End still went down - losing 2-1. Saville continued in rich goalscoring form, though, and two hat-tricks against Mansfield Town and Leyton Orient was followed by the winning goal in a tremendous 2-1 success over Northampton Town. By this stage, every North End fan had adopted him to their hearts, despite only being at the club for a matter of weeks.

He went on to score his 100th league goal in Preston North End's game at Cambridge United, a game we lost 2-1. He ended the season as the club's top scorer, with thirty goals, a truly tremendous achievement by the player.

He went on to score his 100th league goal in Preston North End's game at Cambridge United, a game we lost 2-1.

footy
BAXI

4

Bill Shankly

wing half

The managerial exploits of Bill Shankly have been well documented over the past forty years, and rightly so, as he helped project Liverpool Football Club onto the domestic and European stage in illuminating and grand manner. Two FA Cup triumphs, the capture of the coveted UEFA Cup, a Second Division Championship, three League titles and a couple of Charity Shields are ample proof of his undoubted managerial skills.

But, this book is largely concerned with players and as a young man, Bill Shankly was rightly regarded as a fine wing half, one of the finest of the pre-war generation. He helped Preston North End to a famous FA Cup win in 1938, when a George Mutch penalty in the 89th minute secured the Lancashire side's first win in this prestigious competition since 1888.

Shankly (second right back row), poses for the 1937/38 team photo.

Shankly was a fiery, tough, but eminently fair wing half, a position which, in the modern game has become totally redundant, certainly in name, at least. He played with a passion and commitment which damaged a few reputations, and a few shins along the way! But for Shankly, this was the only way he knew how to play football. Whilst Tom Finney was strutting his stuff on the flanks, Shankly would help provide the ammunition for the wing legend. During the course of ninety minutes he would alternate between defence and attack, contributing to his team's rearguard action one minute and the next, leaping forward in support of another attack. His ball-winning ability was second to none, and his positional play was of a truly forceful nature, which meant expending energy, and lots of it during a game. His distribution of the ball was both secure and steady, carrying the ball forward as he searched for attacking options. For any readers of this book who have managed to see extra footage of the 1938 Cup final, just watch how Shankly used his long throw technique to unhinge the Huddersfield Town defence; and we all thought Vinny Jones had invented that tactic!

His ball-winning ability was second to none, and his positional play was of a truly forceful nature, which meant expending energy, and lots of it during a game.

If Shankly made his name as a manager with Liverpool Football Club, it's fair to state that he made his name as a player with Preston North End Football Club. He arrived at Deepdale in July 1933, from Carlisle United, the same club which, in later years, would provide him with the opportunity of cutting his managerial teeth in his first appointment after his retirement as a player. His arrival in Lancashire cost the club £500, but was certainly money well spent when you consider his timely contribution to the Preston cause over two decades.

The Cumbrian club had plucked the young Shankly from the relative obscurity of Scottish junior football, where Bill, along with his five brothers, played for the local side, Glenbuck Cherrypickers. As a diversion from the mundane daily life in this impoverished area of Scotland, local boys would escape to the local fields, mark out a rough pitch and play football until tea-time, before embarking on yet another game of football after their meal had settled in their stomachs. There is a defining photograph of Bill Shankly, after arriving home on leave from spending time in the forces during World War II. He's seen playing football with some local youngsters, some as young as eight or nine years of age. Shankly is seen jumping high to head the ball home, despite the frantic attentions of the entire opposition team. The photograph was taken on a Sunday afternoon during the early 1940's, and highlights the passion which he always brought to the game. It didn't matter to Shankly whether the challenge was an impromptu five-a-side match, an FA Cup final or a European tie, he always had that same hunger to be competitive. That passion for the game was to stand him in good stead throughout his life in football.

That defining quality I've just mentioned, by definition, couldn't fail to inspire other people, and it was this unbridled enthusiasm which, if you will excuse the obvious plagiarism, helped him win friends and influence people both as a player, a manager and a person. The fact that Bill Shankly was so dedicated to his profession was testimony to his character as a man. During his sixteen years at Preston North End he rarely missed a game, either through injury or exclusion from the team. In his first ever season at Deepdale, he played a massive part in helping North End secure promotion back to Division One. He played in one of the finest teams the club ever produced; this period of success concluded with successive appearances in a Wembley Cup final in 1937 and 1938. His all-round tenacity and ball-winning skills were finally rewarded when he was selected for the Scottish international squad. Shankly eventually won five caps in the famous blue shirt, though surely would have played for Scotland on many more occasions but for the outbreak of war in 1939.

In his first full season at Deepdale, the fiery wing half played twenty four times in total as Preston achieved their aim of escaping from the Second Division. During the next eight seasons, Shankly missed just twenty eight games out of a maximum three hundred and nineteen league games, stepping down from the team just once through injury. He continued playing for North End after the war, until eventually hanging up his boots in 1949. Shankly played two hundred and ninety six league games for Preston and appeared in a record forty three successive FA Cup ties for the club, before eventually stepping down to become player/coach to the reserve team.

His all-round tenacity and ball-winning skills were finally rewarded when he was selected for the Scottish international squad.

Tony Singleton

centre half

Saturday 30th August 1960, certainly stands out as a red letter day for Preston North End. It was on that momentous day that Peter Thompson, Alan Spavin and Tony Singleton made their debuts for the club against Arsenal at Deepdale.

The arrival of all three youngsters was timely and much needed, after a trio of defeats during the early part of the season, which had the Deepdale faithful and management team tearing out their hair in frustration.

Thankfully, the contribution to the team's cause that day helped Preston North End record an impressive 2-0 success over the Gunners. Tony Singleton's contribution was impressive, though temporary, as a rib injury, sustained in the first half, curtailed his contribution for the rest of the game. Nevertheless, he returned to play in thirty seven league games that season.

Tony had arrived at Deepdale from local football with a tasty defensive reputation, which had been honed and refined on the playing fields of west Lancashire. A solid and totally reliable defender, he forged a great defensive blockade during the early to mid-1960's. During his Deepdale career, Singleton played in 287 league games, although he didn't manage to get his name on the scoresheet for Preston North End in the cut and thrust of bread and butter football. Saying that, it must be pointed out that it was his goal in the FA Cup semi-final against Swansea City in 1964 that helped the club to their first FA Cup final in ten years.

A solid and totally reliable defender, he forged a great defensive blockade during the early to mid-1960's.

Jimmy Smith

left back

Jimmy Smith arrived at Deepdale from Arbroath FC, a Scottish junior side in 1955, making his full league debut in a 4-3 defeat to Manchester United at Deepdale on 13th December 1958. A cultured left back, Smith was also adaptable, a quality which came in handy when injury forced changes in the side.

During his time at the club, Smith played in numerous positions, including a spell at centre forward during the relegation season of 1960/61. He played a trio of games in this position, managing to get his name on the scoresheet on three occasions.

But, a serious ankle injury, sustained against Fulham, meant he missed a large proportion of the rest of that sad season. In terms of goals scored, Smith hit the net thirteen times during his Deepdale career, which wasn't a bad record considering his favoured position was as a wing half. He eventually made 314 league appearances for Preston North End, moving to left back during the twilight of his career. He played in the 1964 FA Cup final against West Ham United, and distinguished himself with honours, though his sterling efforts didn't receive much tangible reward as the Hammers lifted the trophy after their 3-2 success.

In terms of goals scored, Smith hit the net thirteen times during his Deepdale career, which wasn't a bad record considering his favoured position was as a wing half.

In 1969, he moved to Stockport County, making seventy eight league appearances for the Cheshire side, before hanging up his boots in the early 1970's.

Alex Spark

right half

4

Preston North End were first alerted to the talents of Alex Spark when he was playing junior football in his native Stenhousemuir. A talented wing half, the youngster, on the advice of his father, left Scotland for Preston in the mid 1960's.

He made his Preston North End first team debut during the 1967/68 season and he soon found favour with the Deepdale crowd, with a determined but cool playing style. He was also skilfully adept, and able to carry and distribute the ball in a highly intelligent manner, much to the frustration of so many opponents.

He also had the ability to help out in attack, though his main forte was as a cultured defender. He made 225 league appearances for Preston North End in a highly distinguished career at Deepdale. He later moved back to Scotland to join Motherwell, before making a return journey to England to join Bradford City a few years later.

He made 225 league appearances for Preston North End in a highly distinguished career at Deepdale.

Alan Spavin

inside left

Preston North End acquired the services of Alan Spavin when he was only fifteen years of age. He had initially made his footballing name in his native Lancaster. He later joined Carnforth Rangers, before his potential was spotted by the club. He later starred in North End's youth team, which made it to the FA Youth Cup Final in 1960, only to lose out to Chelsea.

Spavin soon found himself in Preston North End's first team, and quickly established a solid reputation as a midfield dynamo. If other players were destined to grab the lion's share of the limelight, it was Spavin's tenacity, perseverance and dedication to duty which kept the team on the boil.

The midfielder was always willing to help out both defence and attack, though found it difficult to establish any kind of goalscoring reputation. Nevertheless, the team nearly always struggled whenever Spavin wasn't playing. He played in the 1964 FA Cup final side, and eventually played in 424 league games for Preston North End during a twelve season career at Deepdale. And, despite the critics, he did manage to get his name on the scoresheet on twenty six occasions for the club. Two of those goals came during the final game of the 1970/71 season, when Preston North End beat Rotherham United to clinch the Third Division Championship.

In 1973, Spavin decided to leave Deepdale for a new life across the Atlantic. He joined American side, Washington Diplomats. His career in the burgeoning North American Soccer league went relatively well, but in 1977/78, he returned to this country to rejoin Preston North End, playing in another seven league games before he finally called it a day.

He played in the 1964 FA Cup Final side, and eventually played in 424 league games for Preston North End during a twelve season career at Deepdale.

6 Nobby Stiles

half back

One of the game's great characters, Nobby Stiles joined Preston North End after a highly distinguished career for Manchester United and England. A member of the 1966 World Cup winning side, Nobby also had two League Championship medals and a European Cup winners medal to his credit.

Nobby was rightly feted throughout the land for his tigerish endeavours on the pitch and his humour off it. Before joining the Lilywhites, though, he had spent some time at Ayresome Park, the home of Middlesbrough FC. He joined the North East club in May 1971, and because of his leadership qualities was quickly made captain of the team.

Stiles (pictured front row, far right), combined coaching with playing before finally becoming manager.

Unfortunately, Nobby accumulated a succession of injuries whilst playing for Middlesbrough, and didn't manage to stamp his authority as much as he would have presumably liked. Seeking a change in fortune, he elected to join Preston North End in August 1973, and quickly settled into the team. He made forty six league appearances for the club before stepping down from the playing side to concentrate on a new role as Chief Coach. His elevation to the manager's chair was almost a natural progression, and this momentous appointment occurred in July 1977.

In his first season in the Deepdale hot-seat, Nobby guided Preston North End to promotion to Division Two. The next two seasons were merely campaigns of consolidation as the club finished seventh and tenth in their new league environment. But, the wheel of fortune, which for so long had spun in Nobby's direction, suddenly careered wilfully out of control, to the point where Preston North End faced the ignominy of relegation to the Third Division the following season. Shortly afterwards, Nobby found himself out of a job. Such is life in the hurly burly world of professional football.

He made forty six league appearances for the club before stepping down from the playing side to concentrate on a new role as Chief Coach.

Sammy Taylor

left wing

Taylor signed for the club from Falkirk in May 1955, for £8,500, with the curious proviso added to his newly signed contract that his new club would put on a floodlit game at Deepdale for him. Having enjoyed meeting his new team-mates over the pre-season period, Taylor finally made his league debut in August against Newcastle United, a game which Preston North End won 4-2.

His first season was spent primarily as a stand-in for either Finney or Morrison, but through perseverance and patience, and not a little skill, finally made the left wing spot his own. Funnily enough, Taylor always admitted to preferring to play on the opposite flank, but Finney had claimed that spot for himself long ago.

When Finney was switched to centre forward by manager, Cliff Britton, Taylor got his move to the right wing, proving the truth of his words by banging in twenty six goals during the following two seasons, as North End finished third and second in the First Division.

He played 166 games for Preston, the final one coming against Manchester United at Deepdale on 22nd April 1961, before he departed to join Carlisle United for a £2,500 fee. He went on to play almost 100 games for the Brunton Park club, before leaving to join Fourth Division, Southport, who were, incidentally, managed at that time by former North End great, Willie Cunningham.

He played 166 games for Preston, the final one coming against Manchester United at Deepdale on 22nd April 1961, before he departed to join Carlisle United for a £2,500 fee.

Derek Temple

right wing

The Liverpool born forward had already received the game's highest plaudits after scoring the winning goal in one of the most dramatic post-war FA Cup finals in history. The game was Everton v Sheffield Wednesday in 1966, and after finding themselves two goals down, the Toffees suddenly found much needed inspiration late in the game to haul the deficit back, before Temple struck the winner in a dramatic 3-2 victory.

His Everton career had begun in the mid 1950's, after the Goodison Park club had been alerted to his immense promise after seeing him star for Lancashire and England schoolboys during the 1953/54 season. As a portent to his goalscoring potential, Temple had already got his name on the scoresheet on seventy occasions during one particular season as a schoolboy, and regularly hit five or six goals in matches. He made his league debut for Everton in March 1957, and in total played in 232 league games for the club.

His prolific form in front of goal was finally rewarded with a full England international cap against West Germany in 1965. In 1967, Preston North End pulled off a major scoop by managing to secure his signature for a bargain fee of £35,000, after Everton manager, Harry Catterick had decided to dispense with the forward's services.

Temple soon began to show the same form for Preston North End that he had shown for his previous club, with the goals flowing on a regular basis. A powerfully built forward, he didn't allow his lack of height in the penalty area to impinge on his undoubted goalscoring record. He was also adaptable, being able to fill a variety of roles upfront when injury or suspension ruled out team-mates in the Preston North End forward line. He eventually spent three seasons at Deepdale, scoring fourteen goals in seventy six league games. He later moved to Lancashire neighbours, Wigan Athletic.

He was also adaptable, being able to fill a variety of roles upfront when injury or suspension ruled out team-mates in the Preston North End forward line.

John Thomas

striker

John Thomas took the long and winding road to Deepdale, arriving in July 1985 for £5,000 from Lincoln City. His career had begun at Everton, though his first team chance never arrived. He was eventually loaned out to Tranmere Rovers and Halifax Town, where he did manage to secure those all-important league appearances.

He was then transferred from Goodison Park to Burnden Park on a free transfer, but after forcing his way into the Bolton Wanderer's first team, his luck suddenly deserted him as he was struck down by a succession of injuries. Eventually, the club decided to dispense with his services, and he left to join Chester City in May 1982 on a free transfer.

John Thomas (third right, front row), was a member of the 1986/87 PNE squad.

Suddenly, John Thomas's fortunes turned for the better as he hit twenty one goals in forty six games, which made him the Sealand Road outfit's top scorer in the 1982/83 season. His newly found goalscoring form alerted other clubs, and in July 1983 Lincoln City paid £22,000 for his services. Even though he scored twenty one goals in seventy one games for the Sincil Bank club, Thomas was allowed to make the move north to Deepdale a couple of years later.

During his first season at the club, Thomas experienced mixed fortunes, as he finished the season as leading goalscorer, but had to face up to the fact that the club would have to apply for re-election, having finished next to bottom of Division Four. A year later, the club's fortunes had taken a turn for the better, as they won promotion to Division Three, with John Thomas scoring twenty seven goals and finishing as the club's top scorer, just as he had done the previous year.

In July 1987, Bolton Wanderers, alerted by his prolific form in front of goal, shelled out £30,000 to bring their former reject back to Burnden Park. Former Liverpool captain, Phil Neal was in charge at the time, and he must have been highly impressed with his new forward's form for his new club, especially after he had scored twenty two league goals during the Trotters' march to promotion from Division Four. The former Deepdale forward later moved to the Hawthorns, before rejoining Preston North End for a £50,000 fee in 1990. His goalscoring record was improved upon after returning to the North West, and in total he managed to score forty four goals in 105 league games during two highly successful spells at Preston North End.

The former Deepdale forward later moved to the Hawthorns, before rejoining Preston North End for a £50,000 fee in 1990.

Peter Thompson

forward

Peter Thompson arrived at Deepdale as an apprentice footballer in the late 1950's, signing professional forms with the club during the summer of 1959. Such was his progress at the club, that little over twelve months later and at the tender age of seventeen, he made his first team debut against the mighty Arsenal. For the Carlisle born winger, it was a dream come true, performing on the same pitch with players whose autographs had been adorning his bedroom wall just a couple of years earlier.

He quickly built a spectacular reputation at Deepdale, with a brand of attacking wing play which echoed the brilliance of his predecessor, Tom Finney. Thompson made 121 league appearances for North End during the next couple of seasons.

Unfortunately, the club weren't able to keep hold of their wing treasure, as a number of First Division clubs, excited by his style of play, began congregating outside the Deepdale doors in an effort to sign him. As with Gordon Milne two years earlier, Bill Shankly was swift to spot a good 'un, and swooped to secure his signature for £40,000 in August 1963, despite the close attentions of Everton, Wolverhampton Wanderers and Italian giants, Juventus.

In his first season at Anfield, he helped Liverpool to the First Division Championship, scoring two goals in their impressive title clincher against Arsenal on the final day of the season. He went on to win another League Championship medal, an FA Cup winners medal, and was rewarded for his fine club form by winning sixteen international caps for England, as well as representing the Football League.

For the Carlisle born winger, it was a dream come true, performing on the same pitch with players whose autographs had been adorning his bedroom wall just a couple of years earlier.

Tommy Thompson

inside right

When you think back to some of football's greatest attacking partnerships, you would be hard pressed to find one as skilled and prolific in front of goal as Tom Finney and Tommy Thompson were. During five glorious years, between 1955 and 1960, this remarkable duo set the football world alight, with a brand of attacking play which simply mesmerised opposition defences.

Thompson arrived at Deepdale, having already made a big name for himself at Aston Villa, where he had plundered goals as if they were going out of fashion for a number of seasons. He had joined Villa from Newcastle United, his home town club, where he had originally learnt his goalscoring trade.

It cost Preston North End £27,000 to lure this prolific forward to Deepdale, but after donning the famous white shirt for the first time, in the opening game of the 1955/56 season against Everton at Goodison Park, there was little doubt the club had got themselves one of the bargains of the century. The date was 20th August, 1955, and Thompson, playing alongside Tom Finney for the first time, simply annihilated the Toffeemen, in front of 54,537 vociferous Evertonians.

Within two minutes of the opening whistle, Thompson had silenced the vast home support by scoring Preston North End's opening goal. The visitors went on to win that game 4-0, and Thompson was already being hailed a hero by the Deepdale faithful. His popularity soared even higher after scoring five times in the opening six games of that campaign. With Finney constantly supplying the goods, Thompson simply mopped up any chance which went begging inside the penalty area. During the next five

The date was 20th August, 1955, and Thompson, playing alongside Tom Finney for the first time, simply annihilated the Toffeemen, in front of 54,537 vociferous Evertonians.

seasons, the pair clocked up 203 league goals between them, a remarkable statistic, you must agree.

In terms of the amount of goals scored in an individual season, the centre forward's best campaign was saved for the 1957/58 season, the year Preston North End finished second to Wolverhampton Wanderers in the race for the First Division title. Thompson got his name on the scoresheet thirty four times that season, eclipsing all his past and future goalscoring exploits as he strove hard to help Preston North End capture some silverware.

On the international front, he gained the second of his two England caps in 1957 in the game against Scotland at Wembley. He had gained his first cap whilst at Villa Park, when he had represented his country against Wales at Ninian Park in the Home International Championships. Unfortunately for Thompson, his Preston North End team-mate, Tommy Docherty was in sparkling form for the Scots on that day, restricting him to a couple of shots which were well saved by the goalkeeper. One bright spot to emerge from the game though, was the fact that Thompson played a significant part in the build-up to England's winning goal, which was scored by Derek Kevan.

When his strike partner, Tom Finney retired from playing in 1960, Thompson knew he was merely marking time before his own retirement. That sad moment arrived a year later, after persistent knee trouble had helped curtail his playing career. After Preston were relegated at the end of the 1960/61 season, the club had to let certain players go, and Thompson was one of those who found themselves surplus to requirements. He left to join Stoke City, and helped the Potters to promotion to the First Division, before leaving to join Barrow.

Tommy eventually made his way back to Deepdale as coach to Preston North End's B team, under England and Manchester United legend, Bobby Charlton. He eventually grew disenchanted with modern attitudes and retired from the game soon afterwards to concentrate on his family business.

Ray Treacy

centre forward

Ray Treacy is included in this compendium of great players because of his excellent goalscoring form, not just for Preston North End but also for a number of other clubs. But, the sad fact of the matter, from the club's point of view at least, is that Treacy probably never realised his full potential at Deepdale, through a variety of circumstances.

He had begun his playing career at West Bromwich Albion in 1961, having arrived in the Midlands from Dublin club, Home Farm. He stayed at the Hawthorns for six years, before making a move to the capital, where he joined Charlton Athletic.

His form flourished in a big way at the Valley, to the point where, in five seasons, he scored forty four goals in 149 league games. He then upped sticks to join Swindon Town, where he spent three successful seasons. Preston North End then made the decision to bring the forward to Deepdale in December 1973. He was put straight into the first team, making nineteen appearances during his initial season at the club. The only problem was, he was asked to play in midfield for the vast majority of those games, and this didn't please Treacy one iota. He considered his best position was as a forward, but didn't really get an opportunity of shining upfront during this period of his career. During the following season, things went from bad to worse for Ray Treacy, as his first team appearances dried up alarmingly. He was even sent out on loan to Oldham Athletic for a spell before being put on the transfer list at the end of the 1974/75 season. It was only when Mel Holden left to join Sunderland did he get the chance he had waited so long for, a place in the Preston North End forward line. He quickly proved a point by scoring in Preston North End's opening game of the 1975/76 season, against Colchester United.

It was only when Mel Holden left to join Sunderland did he get the chance he had waited so long for, a place in the Preston North End forward line.

Ray Treacy won forty two Republic of Ireland caps, an impressive total considering the vagaries of fortune he had suffered at various times during his long playing career. He eventually left Deepdale at the end of the 1975/76 season, signing for Lancashire neighbours, Oldham Athletic. But, after just three games for the Latics, he rejoined his former club, West Bromwich Albion, where he had initially begun his career.

1 Roy Tunks

goalkeeper

It's interesting to note that Roy Tunks, if selected, could well have ended up representing West Germany in goal, having been born in that country when his father was serving with Her Majesty's Armed Forces. But, his family quickly asserted their British sovereignty, and Roy soon found himself back in this country.

As a schoolboy, Tunks initially made his name, would you believe, as a centre forward, and a good one at that! He was eventually made captain of Worthing Boys, before being asked to attend trials for the county team. Fate lent a hand that day, because the regular goalkeeper failed to turn up for whatever reason, and Tunks, fancying ninety minutes of diving around in the mud, asked to play in goal. The rest, as they say, is history.

His first league club was Rotherham United, and he went on to make 138 league appearances for the Millmoor club. His first team debut was made just a few days after his seventeenth birthday, such was his form for Rotherham's youth and reserve teams beforehand. But, as so often happens in football, things didn't work out for him during his stay at Millmoor, to the point where he travelled far and wide for trials with various other clubs, including Newcastle United, Ipswich Town and York City.

In November 1974, after much travelling, he found his spiritual home at Deepdale. The club paid £7,000 for his services, and he quickly asserted his authority between the sticks. He was almost an ever-present in the Preston North End side, and eventually made 277 league appearances for the club, before leaving to join Wigan Athletic in 1981. He went on to play almost as many games for the Springfield Park outfit, making 245 league appearances for the club. He later joined Hartlepool United for a spell, before making the return journey to Deepdale for the 1988/89 season. He made a further twenty five league appearances for Preston North End.

The club paid £7,000 for his services, and he quickly asserted his authority between the sticks.

Joe Walton

full back

Joe Walton joined Preston North End in 1948 from Manchester United, where he had already made quite a name for himself as a steady, if unspectacular full back. His arrival at Deepdale signalled a renaissance in form for the Manchester born player, as he settled into life in his new footballing surroundings.

But, as often happens in football, Joe suddenly hit a bad patch, with the result that he lost his place in the first team to Billy Scott. Nevertheless, he knuckled down to life in the reserve team for a spell, working hard to win back his coveted place in the Preston North End first team.

His perseverance and hard work finally paid off when he was reinstated to the senior ranks. He soon made the full back spot his own with a series of worthy displays, which won over the manager and the Deepdale faithful. He appeared in the 1954 FA Cup final, and eventually made 400 appearances in a Preston North End shirt - the first full back in the club's history to achieve such a career landmark. After such a long and distinguished Deepdale career, he was allowed to leave to join Accrington Stanley, playing in eighteen league games for the East Lancashire club.

From left to right: **Joe Walton, Dennis Hatsell and Tommy Thompson.**

He appeared in the 1954 FA Cup final, and eventually made 400 appearances in a Preston North End shirt - the first full back in the club's history to achieve such a career landmark.

Charlie Wayman

centre forward

Born in Bishop Auckland, Charlie Wayman began his playing career with Newcastle United, and soon made a name for himself, becoming the Second Division's top goalscorer in 1946/47, with thirty goals. With a surplus of goalscorers at St James Park, it wasn't long before the Tyneside club took advantage of Southampton's offer to take Wayman to The Dell. Once established on the South coast, he soon found the target, once again finishing the season as the Second Division's top goalscorer, this time with thirty two goals.

The player had come to Preston North End's attention after a game between the Saints and ourselves at The Dell, when Wayman scored a hat-trick in Southampton's 3-0 win. Preston manager, Will Scott quickly realised that Wayman had the potential to become a tremendous asset to his squad, particularly when teamed with the likes of Tom Finney and Andy Beattie in the forward line. Scott got his man soon afterwards when Southampton agreed to sell him in September 1950, as part of the deal which took Eddie Brown to The Dell.

Wayman took three games to notch his first goal for his new club, his first strike coming against Notts County in a league game, with a huge crowd turning out to watch the action. An energetic, but slightly diminutive player, Wayman forged an electric partnership with Finney and Beattie, helping Preston North End to win promotion in 1950/51. He had already served notice of his impending greatness during his first season at Deepdale, when scoring four, first half goals against Queens Park Rangers in a Christmas Day fixture at Loftus Road. He ended that initial campaign having scored twenty seven goals, thus securing his affections amongst the Deepdale faithful.

Another sparkling statistic to emerge from Wayman's prolific goalscoring record with Preston North End, was the fact he managed to score in every round during North End's historic run to the 1954 FA Cup final. A few short months later, and six games into the 1954/55 season, manager, Frank Hill created uproar in the town when transferring Wayman to Middlesbrough. What baffled the fans most about his departure was the fact he had already scored six goals during the early season campaign, with the promise of lots more goals to come, judging by the form he was in. Wayman had averaged two goals in every three games for Preston North End and finished up having scored 117 goals in 171 league and cup matches.

Wayman fired North End into a 2-1 lead in the 1954 FA Cup final, only to see West Brom fight back and win 3-2.

Gary Williams

left back

Arriving from non-league club, Marine, Gary Williams made his professional debut for Preston North End in the final game of the 1971/72 season, against Swindon Town. But, it wasn't until three seasons later that Gary really established himself in the first team. Originally labelled as an outside left, it wasn't until manager, Nobby Stiles decided to put him at left back that his Deepdale career really began to take off.

He began making regular appearances in the side, and his form, patchy to start with, had suddenly become ultra consistent. The following year, 1975/76, saw Gary really settle into the team in a big way. He appeared in forty four league games and was voted Preston North End's Player of the Year by the fans.

The following season, even eclipsed the previous campaign for Gary, as his good form continued apace. Suddenly, a host of top clubs were vying for his attention, including Brighton & Hove Albion, who put a £100,000 offer on the Deepdale table, as they sought to take both Williams and Mark Lawrenson to the Goldstone Ground. But, despite the club suffering financial difficulties at that time, the Preston North End board rejected the offer. In hindsight, it was a wise move, because a short time later, the South coast club came back with improved offers for both players; offering £110,000 for Lawrenson and £45,000 for Williams. This time, the club's board of directors accepted the offer.

Williams did very well at Brighton, making 158 league appearances for the club at the top level, before moving to Crystal Palace in July 1982. Sadly, after playing just ten games for his new club, he suffered a terrible knee injury which prematurely curtailed his playing career.

The following year, 1975/76, saw Gary really settle into the team in a big way. He appeared in forty four league games and was voted Preston North End's Player of the Year by the fans.

Dave Wilson

right wing

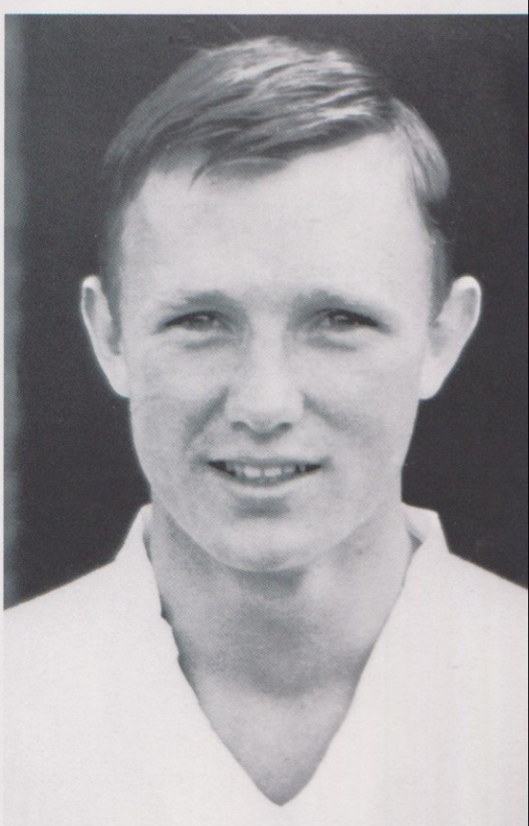
As talented youngsters go, Dave Wilson seemed to have it all. A terrific ball player who possessed such consummate talent, a lot of pundits thought he would go far in the game. At one stage of his career, he was even being talked about as the new Tom Finney, such was his promise whenever he turned out for Preston North End.

He had arrived at Deepdale as a raw youngster, and quickly established himself in the club's junior sides. He starred in a famous FA Youth Cup tie against Wigan Athletic when he was sixteen years old, and after that outing the sky was the limit as far as the watching crowd were concerned. It got even better for Wilson, as his star continued to shine right through to the final against Chelsea, which Preston North End lost, unfortunately.

Soon afterwards, Wilson was called upon for first team duty, and he didn't let anybody down, scoring thirty one goals in 170 league games during the next few seasons. His time at Deepdale had been a happy one, but when former Preston North End legend, Bill Shankly offered to take him to Anfield, the forward jumped at the chance. Shankly was looking for cover in his squad, and the signing of Wilson epitomised this philosophy. Unfortunately, Wilson struggled to stake a claim in the Liverpool first team from the day he signed until the day he left. He played in numerous reserve games for the Reds, but never managed to establish a place in their senior side.

In June 1968, he returned to Deepdale, and quickly found favour with his new manager, appearing on the first team scene from day one. Wilson played in a further 111 league games for Preston North End, before playing out his career at Bradford City and then Southport.

At one stage of his career, he was even being talked about as the new Tom Finney, such was his promise whenever he turned out for Preston North End.



Neil Young

inside left

Manchester born, Neil came up through the ranks with Manchester City, eventually to star alongside such players as Mike Summerbee, Colin Bell and Francis Lee.

He showed a touch of class in some of City's best years, winning Championship, FA Cup and Cup Winners Cup medals and leaving a lasting impression on the 1969 FA Cup Final when he scored the winning goal. After playing over 350 games for City, scoring nearly 100 goals, he moved to Deepdale in a swap deal with David Connor.

Neil Young (middle row, second right), joined North End in 1972 after a very successful time at Manchester City.

He made his North End debut in February 1972, taking over the number seven shirt from an injured Ricky Heppolette. In his second game Neil scored his first goal for North End away at Hull City. Neil's first four games for the Lilywhites were all in different numbered shirts, but he was soon to settle down in a regular position.

Neil is remembered as having a graceful long stride and a cultured left foot and he was able to illustrate his abilities at Deepdale, even though the club were in a transitional period and struggling, during his time here.

Neil played at Preston for over two seasons, notching up 70 games in the process and hammering in 18 goals. In July 1974 he moved to Rochdale who turned out to be his last club, before retiring from the professional game.

In his second game Neil scored his first goal for North End away at Hull City. Neil's first four games for the Lilywhites all in different numbered shirts, but he was soon to settle down in a regular position.

RAMSBOTTOM
8
Kit
PRESTON NORTH END FC

And then there's...

Whichever 100 players had been chosen for inclusion in this book, it was inevitable that other possible contenders would be omitted. It was a hard choice, deciding who to include and who to leave out. The following players were all popular choices with fans who took part in a recent poll run through the pages of the Lancashire Evening Post to find the best ever fantasy North End team.

In trying to get a balance, with players from different decades represented in roughly equal numbers, some great names had to be excluded. The result of the recent poll indicated that a handful of popular players deserved mention, simply because of the number of fans who included the player in their fantasy team. For the record, we look at these players in this chapter. Where better to start, than with two international namesakes, Bobby Beattie and Andy Beattie.

Beattie appeared in successive cup finals for Preston North End; the 1937 game against Sunderland, and the 1938 renewal when the Lilywhites overcame Huddersfield Town with a last minute penalty from George Mutch.

ANDY BEATTIE

Andy Beattie played mainly before the war. Even so, he was a popular choice with a significant minority of fans, for inclusion in the 'best ever' team, and as such, warrants an honourable mention here. Andy Beattie arrived at Deepdale from the quaintly named, Scottish non-league side, Inverurie Loco for £150 in March 1935. His initial outing for Preston North End's first team came during a short tour of his native Scotland, and he eventually made his league debut in the final game of that season against West Bromwich Albion at The Hawthorns.

The youngster had to wait a full twelve months before returning to the Preston North End first team, when replacing the injured Bill Shankly in the right half position. It was during the following season that he finally established himself in the team, when being required to play in the right back position, a role he quickly took to with gusto and panache. Beattie was a stylish defender in an era when skilled players were commonplace. He was also very cool under pressure, and was a fine tackler, qualities which eventually earned him a number of Scottish international caps.

Beattie appeared in successive cup finals for Preston North End; the 1937 game against Sunderland, and the 1938 renewal when the Lilywhites overcame Huddersfield Town with a last minute penalty from George Mutch. During the war, the full back kept his hand in by appearing as a guest player for a number of clubs, and also represented the FA, British Army and Northern Command teams. He

also appeared for Preston North End in the War FA Cup final at Wembley against Arsenal in May 1941.

Beattie eventually hung up his boots in March 1947, having made just 125 league appearances for Preston North End. This shortfall is explained by the fact he missed seven seasons due to his war-time activities. After retiring, Beattie turned his hand to football management, and eventually became boss of the Scotland international team. Sadly, Andy Beattie died in 1983, at the age of seventy.

BOBBY BEATTIE

Another Scottish born player, Bobbie Beattie made his Preston North End debut against Stoke City in October 1937, having signed from Kilmarnock for £2,250. A fine ball-playing inside forward, Beattie epitomised

that illustrious tradition of skilled forwards who could control and caress the ball, much to the delight of the Preston North End fans who would pack inside Deepdale to witness his intricate skills.

Beattie was a superb passer of the ball, much to the frustration of opponents intent on stopping his progress with the ball. He initiated many of Preston North End's attacking moves, setting up chance after chance for his attacking team-mates. He also scored a number of goals himself, culminating in the grand total of fifty seven, in 264 league games for the club.

He also won an FA Cup winner's medal in 1938 just a few months after joining the club, and helped Preston North End to lift the War time FA Cup against Arsenal in 1941, as he scored two goals in the replayed final at Ewood Park.

He joined Lancashire neighbours, Wigan Athletic, though his time with the Latics was short lived. He eventually returned to his native Scotland. He wasn't without his admirers as evidenced by the number of votes he received in the recent Lancashire Evening Post poll.

BRIAN MOONEY

He may not have be a great player, but Brian Mooney certainly had one great aspect to his game that endeared him to the fans. He was always ready to give his all. He was a blood and guts player who never gave up. Not surprisingly, some fans felt that merited inclusion in the list of greats. They may have a point.

For the record, the 'Moon Man' was brought to Deepdale by the late John McGrath in October 1987 and during his four seasons at the club became a cult hero. He arrived from Liverpool Football Club - without having played for the first team - as a raw but talented Irish Youth International, for around £35,000. The fans immediately took to his style of play as he ran rings round Third Division defences. In his first season Brian helped North End to the Play-Offs, where they unfortunately lost, over two legs, against Port Vale. He played in over 120 games for North End, scoring 20 goals before making a move to the North East, to Sunderland, for Approximately £150,000. He never managed to spark at Roker Park, however, and ended up moving back to his native Ireland. Brian still plays in Eire showing off his undoubted ability in front of small crowds.

STEVE WILKINSON

Prolific striker, Steve Wilkinson joined Preston North End from Mansfield Town in June 1995 for a bargain fee of £90,000, and soon set Deepdale alight with a run of form in front of goal which quickly endeared him to the fans at Deepdale. The Lincoln born front-man originally started his playing career with Leicester City, where he initially signed as an

apprentice. He spent three seasons at Filbert Street, and had loan spells at Rochdale and Crewe Alexander during his stay in the East Midlands. He then joined Mansfield Town in October 1989 for a fee of £80,000, where he stayed for the next six seasons.

During his stay at Field Mill, Wilkinson became the club's main goalscorer, a facet of his play which tempted Preston North End to spend so much money to bring the player to

Wilkinson was Saville's partner in crime up-front in North End's promotion season.

Deepdale. His form in front of goal continued apace once settled at the club, and this was highlighted during his first season at Deepdale when he scored a hat-trick against his previous club in Preston North End's resounding 6-0 success in October 1995.

Quite apart from playing upfront for the club, Steve also took on the mantle of programme editor on Preston North End's match-day programme, a role which he carried out with great aplomb. He eventually left Deepdale to join Chesterfield in July 1997, where he remained at the start of the 1999/2000 season.

DAVID REEVES

Liverpool born, David Reeves arrived at Deepdale in October 1996 from Carlisle United. He was bought by former manager, Gary Peters to bolster an attack which had been sadly lacking in goals for the opening weeks of the new campaign. It was a wise decision, as Reeves began scoring on a regular basis for the club. He made his Preston North End debut in a 1-0 defeat to Stockport County at Edgeley Park, but in the following game managed to get his name on the scoresheet for the first time in the 2-1 victory over Shrewsbury Town. At the end of his first season at Deepdale, the ever-likeable Reeves had scored fifteen goals, which made him the club's leading goalscorer.

A tall, rangy type of centre forward, Reeves had an acute awareness of what was needed to be done in front of the opposition goal. He was also very brave, a fact which was borne out on countless occasions when the boots were flying, and Reeves was in amongst them trying to conjure a goal for Preston North End. A good header of the ball, too, the forward bagged some vital goals for the club, before departing in 1998 to Chesterfield, where he is still grabbing the goals on a regular basis for the Derbyshire Club.

JONATHAN MACKEN

The capture of Jonathan Macken from Manchester United during the summer of 1997, epitomised manager, Gary Peter's policy of creating a team capable of gaining promotion to the First Division. During his early period at the club, Macken was content to bide his time, as he gained valuable experience in the reserve side, with the occasional first team appearance merely serving as a taster for future ambitions.

Going into November he was the club's leading scorer and is undoubtedly building the foundation for a great career in a white shirt.

Whilst at Manchester United, the youngster had served notice of his impending proliferacy in front of goal, when scoring twenty two times in just twenty seven matches for the club's A team. He has also been called up for England's U20 World Cup squad, alongside team-mate, David Lucas. During his stay at Old Trafford, Macken was able to learn from experienced professionals such as Ole Gunnar Solskjaer and Andy Cole, an apprenticeship which would stand any young striker in good stead.

At the start of the 1999/2000 season there were question marks over Jon Macken. Some pundits said he wasn't a natural goalscorer, and the arrival of striker Steve Basham added further competition for the striker's role in the team. Yet, in a few short months he has silenced his critics in the best way possible, by scoring goals, and lots of them. Going into November he was the club's leading scorer and is undoubtedly building the foundation for a great career in a white shirt. It is testimony to his rapid improvement that some fans thought he warranted a place in the 'best ever' team.

DAVID LUCAS and TEUVO MOILANEN

North End possess two of the brightest goalkeeping prospects in the league. Both David Lucas and Teuvo Moilanen have achieved international honours at an early age, especially for 'keepers. David Lucas is a great advert for the merits of North End's youth system, being Preston born and bred and having progressed from the youth set up to the first team. Both were chosen by some fans for inclusion in North End's 'best ever' team, and whilst that might be an overstatement of their talent compared to the likes of Fred Else and Alan Kelly snr, they both undoubtedly have the potential to go on to be even better 'keepers.

North End's main aim is to regain a place in Division One. Under manager David Moyes, they have a team that can seemingly only get better. Who knows, in a few years time there may be many more contenders for inclusion in a book such as this. Let's hope so!

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Thanks to

The concept for this book evolved from an idea about a fantasy 'best ever' North End team. It grew into this tribute to one hundred of the best players to wear a white shirt in the post war era. Thanks are especially due to the Lancashire Evening Post and their staff for running a 'best ever' team poll, which was undertaken in September 1999. Not only did this create interest in the idea, it also helped us to ensure the players in the book were an accurate reflection of the players most fans would consider to be worthy of inclusion.

Special thanks are due to Ian Rigby and Ian Johnstone for their help.

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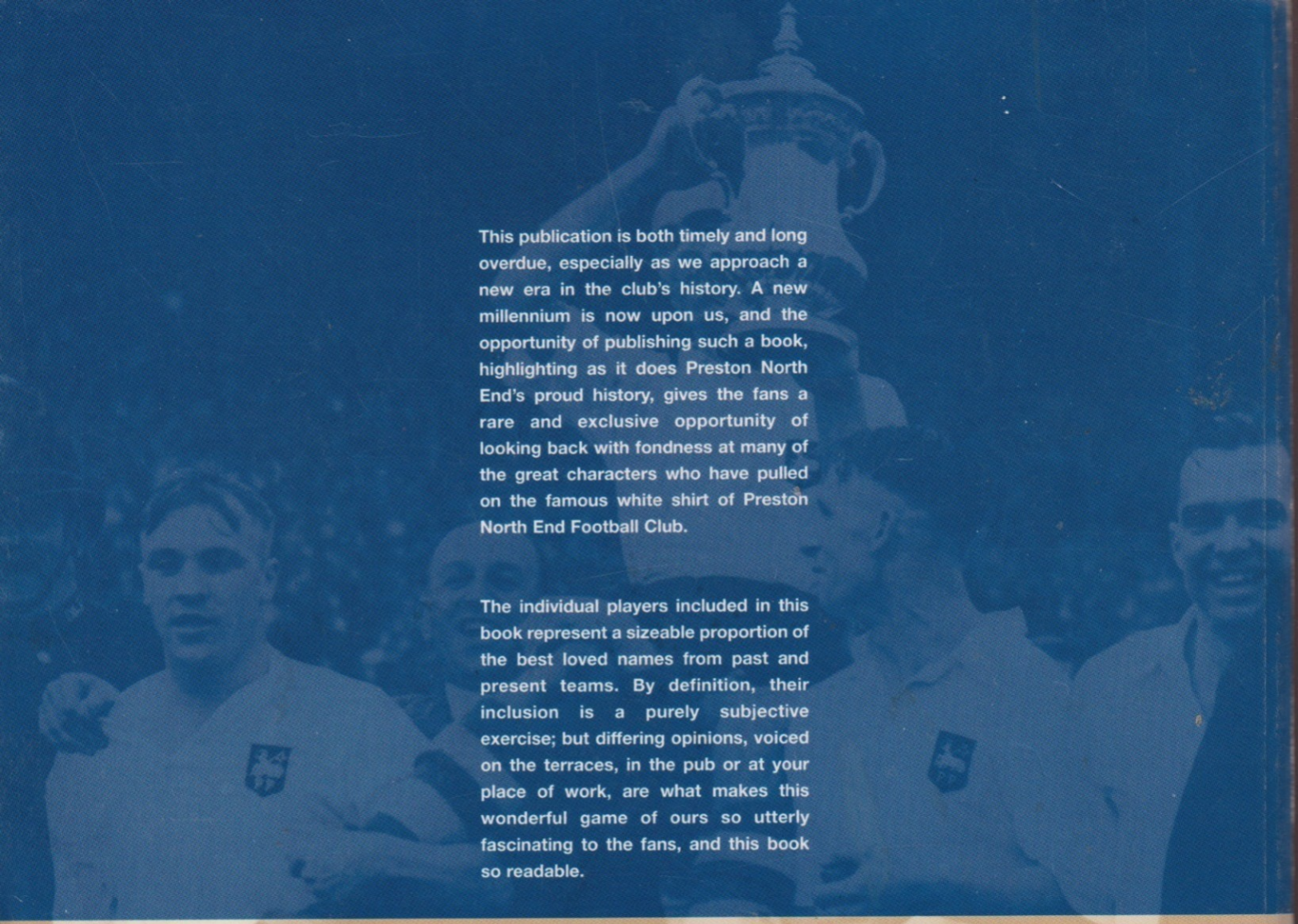

This publication is both timely and long overdue, especially as we approach a new era in the club's history. A new millennium is now upon us, and the opportunity of publishing such a book, highlighting as it does Preston North End's proud history, gives the fans a rare and exclusive opportunity of looking back with fondness at many of the great characters who have pulled on the famous white shirt of Preston North End Football Club.

The individual players included in this book represent a sizeable proportion of the best loved names from past and present teams. By definition, their inclusion is a purely subjective exercise; but differing opinions, voiced on the terraces, in the pub or at your place of work, are what makes this wonderful game of ours so utterly fascinating to the fans, and this book so readable.

The name of Preston North End Football Club is famous throughout football, being founder members of the Football League, and possessing a glorious tradition which encompasses many different playing generations. For this reason alone, it is worth recalling some of those giants who have trod the hallowed Deepdale turf over the years. Players like Tom Finney, Bill Shankly, Tommy Docherty and Willie Cunningham set the tone for this book, whilst latter-day stars such as Alex Bruce, Alan Spavin, Ricky Heppolette and Sean Gregan epitomise the standard which has been set ever since.

No doubt, there will be future generations of players who will seek to emulate the past achievements of those players already mentioned, but for now, we seek to put on record, through this publication, some of the great names from Preston North End's glorious and illustrious past.

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